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REAL FOOD FROM REAL HOME COOKS

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picks of the crop

- Sweet Treats for Pie Lovers
- Orchard-to-Awesome Apple Dishes
- Bountiful Harvest Sunday Suppers

KEEP YOUR FORK . . . THERE'S PIE!
PAGE 77

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COOKING, CARING & SHARING® | OCTOBER 2011

All About Apples. Perfect for sharing, these Bite-Size Apple Pies are easier than pie, *page 39*.

ON OUR COVER Roadfood writers take us to the nuttiest places where pie is king, *page 77*!

Photographer: **Dan Roberts**
Set Stylist: **Stephanie Marchese**
Food Stylists: **Diane Armstrong & Leah Rekau**

Bring On Fall

See ya, summer! Here comes cooler weather, **cozy meals** and delightfully frightful celebrations. Embrace October with **family-friendly dining**, party-ready treats and a no-holds-barred leap into a giant pile of autumn leaves.

SPECIAL THIS ISSUE

30 **Flick or Treat** Pair classic horror films with to-die-for goodies, and you've got a fright fest to remember. Just don't scream with your mouth full

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57 **Contest! Frozen Assets** You'll be thrilled when the chill of a dozen freezable dishes saves the day when you need it most

82 **Across the Table: Jane Kaczmarek** *Malcom in the Middle*'s famed mom talks about Halloween candies she can't resist, why she gets crazy with mayo and her happy connection to *Taste of Home*

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Contemporary design pairs with functionality and colorful décor in this Utah family's recently renovated kitchen

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26 Appetizers & Snacks Nachos go international. So bring your globe-trotting guests along!

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43 Healthy Choices Whether you walk or run in support of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, these protein-packed snacks will keep your energy high

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47 Quick Fix Have to dine and dash? Make breakfast on the run the best it can be with high-speed eats meant for the road

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55 Cooking School Fast and fun snack bars combine cereal, peanut butter and M&M's

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67 Kids in the Kitchen Picky eaters begone! Brilliant reader tips and clever kids' utensils win over even the most finicky

70 Cooks Who Care Bikers with kind souls roll out stashes of homemade burritos to lift the spirits of those in need

◀ **Food to Go!** This cycling crew gives back with burritos, *page 70*

Look for our Field Editors!

These 1,000 volunteer editors, from every state and Canadian province, share recipes and tips with our staff, other readers and online community, as well as spread the word about *Taste of Home* in their area. See all their names on *page 74*. Maybe one of them lives near you!

FE **This icon** next to a name means that person is a *Taste of Home* Field Editor!

72 Field Editors An Ohio Field Editor shares her most requested recipes from her B&B in Amish country, plus profiles of two fall-loving FEs, a tale of being recognized in public and our full listing of all 1,000 Field Editors

77 Roadfood From pecans to peanuts, *Taste of Home* food columnists Jane and Michael Stern reveal how nuts influence (and improve) pies across the country

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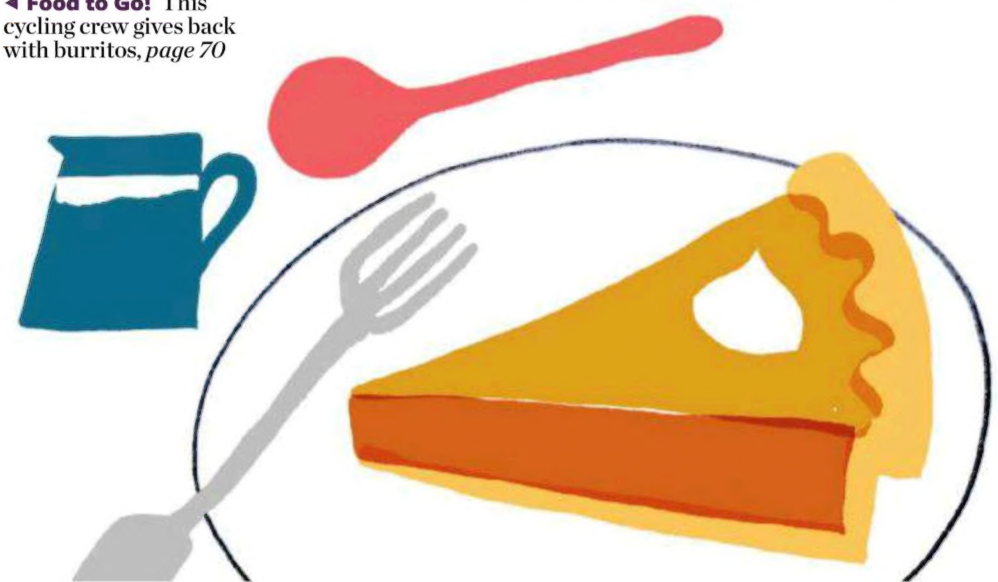
VISIT US ONLINE!

Go to **tasteofhome.com/plus** for more tasty ways to enjoy the apple season, unique Halloween extras and extra-special meals for two.



BOTTOM LEFT: LISA ADAMS; ILLUSTRATION: JENNY BOWERS

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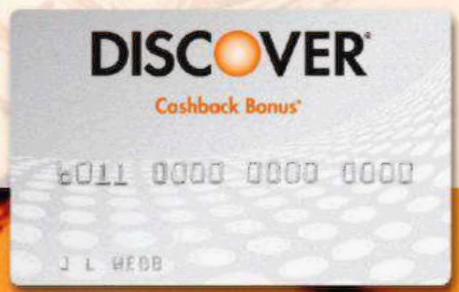

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Make a Scary Face The *Taste of Home* food stylists have some Halloween fun after creating some fab fright-night treats, *page 30.*

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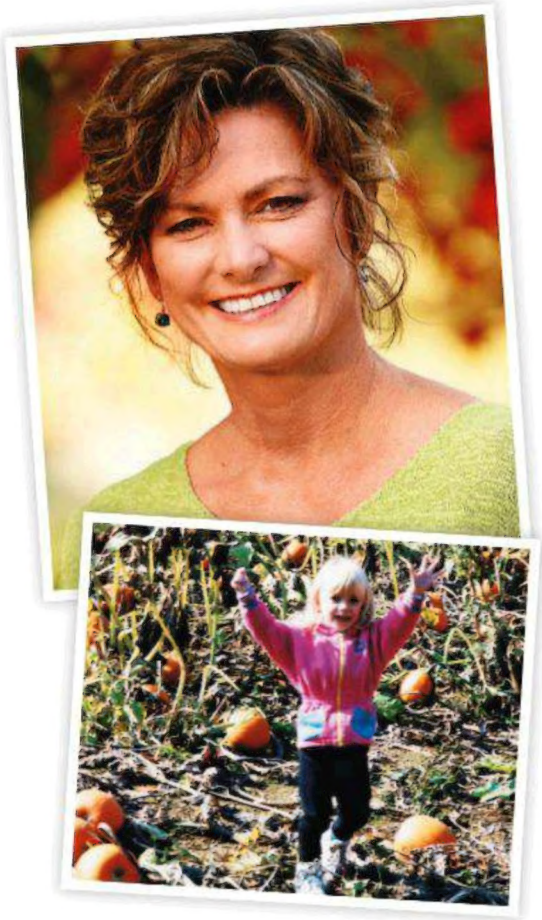
It's *SPOOK*-tacular!

Halloween has always been **supernaturally special** here at *Taste of Home*, so we're **screamingly happy** to give it its own issue



▲ **My daughter, Jackie, in her natural element**

My youngest daughter, Jackie, was born on Halloween. We had expected her to arrive on Thanksgiving Day in 1994, but I guess she felt a Halloween birthday would be a lot more fun. I'll tell you what it has been for me: a lot more work.

The word "celebrate" has never fully described the way many people approach Halloween. It's too much of a production for that—finding costumes, planning for trick or treat, parades, hayrides, haunted house visits—many times involving equal amounts of laughter and tears.

And, of course, the bags, pillowcases and plastic pumpkins filled with candy, dumped unceremoniously onto the floor after the annual neighborhood trek, the loot analyzed, bartered and traded, then squirreled away from greedy siblings and parents who claimed to be health-conscious but who could never help filching a few favorites.

But when you have a child with a birthday on Halloween, you have even more duties. There's the expected birthday treat for school and daycare. There's the party to plan, always Halloween-themed but distinct enough each year so no one gets bored.

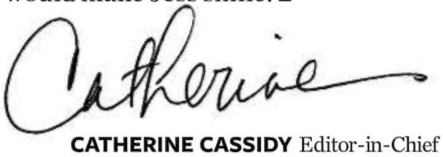
Then there was keeping her older sister, Jess, from transforming into a green-eyed monster. (She really was fairly tolerant, but it helped that, in the early days, my mother always sent her a little gift, too.) And then there was the cleanup—colossal and exhausting. I drafted friends to help, and I often took a vacation day afterward just to rest up.

At *Taste of Home*, Halloween has that same overwhelming, super-special-occasion feel. Only we spend months getting ready for it! During June, July and August, we produce special features and issues, test hundreds of recipes and shoot scads of spooky photos for our magazines, books, website and newsstand special editions. It's way more exhausting than a child's Halloween birthday bash. In a good way, naturally.

We had one problem, though: Because of *TOH* magazine's bimonthly frequency, this spooktacular holiday had to share the October/November issue with the BIG one, the mother of all food holidays: Thanksgiving. Guess which one always had to sit at the kids' table?

So I'm beyond pleased to present the issue you have in your hands—the brand-new October issue! There's all of our usual great stuff here, but the coolest thing is that we were able to devote some serious space to October's signature event, which you've told us you love, too. See just some of the ghoulish fun on *page 30*. (And check out **tasteofhome.com** for even more Halloween craziness.)

This means, of course, that Thanksgiving gets even more attention as well—its very own issue next month (which means twice the October and November goodness at no extra cost to subscribers). A spotlight it doesn't have to share with the scary little sister. I think that would make Jess smile. ■



CATHERINE CASSIDY Editor-in-Chief

Ultimate Halloween Don't miss our new bookazine, at your favorite newsstand now! It has tons more recipes, crafts and ideas for a fantabulous fright-fest.

Hungry for a Challenge? Pull out your tastiest, most incredibly irresistible dish and enter our latest cooking contest: We're looking for **The Best Cook in America 2012**. That could be you! Details, *page 58*.

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Our Readers Share the Love...

Dear Jane...

Even after the pumpkin is carved, there's always the added excitement of baking the pumpkin seeds. I make sure to have a large pumpkin so that I can get about 2 cups of seeds from it. To make crispy seeds, first scrape them out of the shell with a spoon. Place in a bowl of salt water and rub any membrane from them. Arrange seeds on a foil-lined baking sheet. Generously spray with butter-flavored cooking spray. Bake at 250° for 1 to 1½ hours. Stir every 15 minutes and spray one more time. I like mine crispy, so I turn the oven up to 325° for the last 5 minutes. If you like them salty, sprinkle popcorn salt on them after baking. For more pumpkin seed recipes, check out **tasteofhome.com**.

***TOH* editorial assistant Jane Stasik reads all your letters and emails. Drop her a line at dearjane@tasteofhome.com**

LOVE LETTER: BRAVO

I've never written a letter to a magazine, but I had to write this one. The recipe for Family Favorite Pasta Sauce (Aug/Sept) was amazing. I'm a professional cook and caterer, and I was impressed. I think it must've been the brown sugar and vinegar that made the difference. I've used a little white sugar in red sauces before to counterbalance the acid of the tomatoes, but this combo put it over the top in the flavor category. If I had one, I would doff my chef's hat to Jody Bober of St. Clairsville, Ohio. Well done! **—CILLA WHICHTER**
Jacksonville, Florida

Editor's Note: Cilla, we couldn't agree more. Our taste-testing panel swooned over Jody's sauce, too!

Dinner Party Inspiration

When I saw the Grilled Chipotle Shrimp in the April/May issue, I knew I'd struck gold. I served it and the Dulce de Leche Cheesecake at our Mexican Fiesta. So good! When the June/July issue arrived, I was inspired by the burgers in Jane and Michael Stern's Roadfood column. We threw a Burger Bash and made all the burgers from the story! Thanks for the delicious inspiration!
—JULIE MYSZKOWSKI
West Allis, Wisconsin

New American Classic ▶

I knew I had to make the Red, White and Blue Cheesecake from the June/July issue! Being invited to a Fourth of July cookout presented me with the perfect opportunity. The guests were very impressed—a couple even thought it was store-bought. It was not only pretty but delicious as well. This recipe is definitely a keeper!
—JILL COLEMAN
Magnolia, Delaware

Memories In The Making ▶

The Flag Cake recipe from your June/July issue added a wonderful touch to our family's Fourth of July celebration. My 9-year-old daughter, *right*, almost single-handedly pulled off this yummy dessert—with just a little help from Mom! Thanks for helping us make great memories!
—DEBRA TORRES
Clarion, Pennsylvania

Grilled Sensation ▶

I made the Cookout Brownies (Aug/Sept) for a cookout last weekend. They were such a hit! I did cheat a little by using store-bought brownies, but they were cute as could be! Thanks, *Taste of Home*!
—MARY-MARGARET GORE
Pink Hill, North Carolina

Gift Worth Giving

Thank you for the generous donation of $250 to Mommy's Light and for the wonderful feature story, "Forever in Mom's Kitchen," about Jeannine Ginsburg (April/May). We truly appreciate your help in spreading awareness and boosting cookbook sales! This support enables Mommy's Light to help fund traditions and simple pleasures for bereaved children and teens across the country. ■
—BEVERLY ABBONIZIO
Executive Director, Mommy's Light
Downingtown, Pennsylvania

Patriotic and Proud Audrey Torres shares her Flag Cake (June/July, *page 3*). Find the recipe at **tasteofhome.com**

TALK TO US!

We welcome your comments and photos at **editors@tasteofhome.com**. Each issue, one lucky reader will receive a *TOH* apron for sending in our favorite "love" letter of the month. Cilla, *far left*, is this issue's winner!

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mixing bowl

FOOD news • TASTY nuggets • FUN notes

Tootsie Roll Napkin Ring
Wrap napkin ring with flattened Tootsie Rolls, making sure the ends meet. Press with fingers to flatten around inside and outside of ring. Let dry; spray with lacquer.

Holiday Pops

- Use **orange spray-paint** to cover **foam wreath form**. Let dry.
- Trim sticks of unwrapped lollipops and attach to foam with glue gun. Let dry for about 20 minutes.
- Spray lollipop wreath with **clear semigloss lacquer** 3-4 times, letting dry between coats. Do not overspray, as the lollipops will melt if they are too wet.
- When dry, attach **orange bow** to wreath. Hang with **florist wire**.

Candy Gets Dandy

Cast a **sweet spell** over all who enter with easy candy-inspired projects

BY **ELIZABETH RUSSELL** | PRODUCED BY **SARAH BLOESCH** | ILLUSTRATIONS BY **ALLI ARNOLD**

MORE ONLINE: For more candy craft how-tos, visit us online at **tasteofhome.com/halloweencrafts**

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Survey Says

Persona au Gratin

Just for fun, we asked our Facebook fans which food best describes them. Some of the answers made us laugh—and hungry.

Hot sauce! Because I'm full of sass.
French fries! So many different shapes but everyone loves them all.
Raisin buns! Soft, with sweet surprises (and great rolled in butter)!
A buffet! Because I'm a little of this and a little of that.
Almond Joys & Mounds! Sometimes you feel like a nut, sometimes you don't.

Become a fan of *TOH* on Facebook and start sharing your opinions at **facebook.com/tasteofhome**

Gimme 5

BOOOOO-ze

Kids get candy while going door to door, but what about the adults? We asked our staff if they share grown-up beverages when friends and neighbors stop by with costume-clad kids. Here's what they had to say.

I make a batch of ***hot apple cider*** in the slow cooker for our entire trick-or-treating group, with disposable coffee cups and lids. I keep a bottle of ***rum*** next to the cooker for adults to give their beverages extra "flavor." **—HEATHER GERGEN** ASSOCIATE WEB EDITOR

My old neighbor worked for Miller Brewing Co. All the adults liked to stop at his house for their own trick-or-treating session, since he always had ***beer*** to share. **—COLEEN MARTIN** RECIPE ASSET SYSTEM MANAGER

At our Halloween party, we like to have ***Dark and Stormy cocktails***, made of spiced rum and ginger beer with a squeeze of lime. They're so refreshing, with a great warming kick! **—EMILY BETZ TYRA** ASSOCIATE EDITOR, SPECIAL INTEREST PUBLICATIONS

I hit up my sister-in-law's subdivision during trick-or-treating. Her neighbors really get into the spirit and offer kids treats and adults drinks. One neighbor had a fruity vodka drink in test tubes called ***Dracula's Blood***. I've had everything from frothy Frappuccino shots with whipped cream to home-brewed fruity ales and a selection of wines to sample during our strolls. **—EDWIN ROBLES JR.** ASSOCIATE CREATIVE DIRECTOR

What goes better with chocolate candy than ***Boo Baileys***? Coffee and an ounce or two of Baileys Irish Cream. *Mmm!* **—HEATHER RAY** ASSOCIATE EDITOR, *SIMPLE & DELICIOUS*

MORE ONLINE:
For more quick Halloween sippers, visit **tasteofhome.com/Halloween-Drinks**

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Stuff We ♡ Fearsomely Festive Decor

1 Cocoon Man Get wrapped up in the season with this creepy figure that measures 5 feet tall but collapses for storage. **grandinroad.com**, *$40-50*

2 Pumpkin Head Not only does this figure frighten, it also stores candy for those who dare to take it. The jack-o'-lantern on its head hides a plastic container for trick-or-treaters to reach into. Made of hard foam, it stands 32 inches tall. **frightcatalog.com**, *$110*

3 Night-Light Illuminate dark corners, indoors or out, with spooky, spunky paper lanterns. They measure 16 inches in diameter and come available in jack-o'-lantern, bat or witch patterns. **beau-coup.com**, *$4*

4 Spooktacular Decor Give your Halloween party just the right touch of eerie appeal with this black webbed candleholder and serving tray. Bonus: If you didn't get around to dusting lately, any lingering cobwebs will look like they were placed there on purpose. **target.com**, votive candle holder, *$15*; spiderweb two-tiered tray, *$20*

5 Post It Find a variety of Halloween-themed vinyl signs and artwork to adhere to your wall, door or window and safely peel off when the holiday ends. Each features a hand-painted look. **vinylsay.com**, *$8-11*

6 Help, Mummy! Make spines tingle with these life-size mummies made from sturdy foam, metal and wood, and tightly wrapped with real fabric from head to toe. Keep them in a covered area. A crypt, perhaps? **grandinroad.com**, *$100-130*

Eat them, if you dare!

Play with Your Food Body Bites

Our prankster food staff created this simple jiggly, creepy-crawly treat with Halloween fun in mind.

Sprinkle two envelopes **unflavored gelatin** over 1 cup cold **limeade**; let stand for 1 minute. Add 2 cups boiling limeade; stir until gelatin is completely dissolved. Pour into ice cube trays. Refrigerate for 30 minutes or until soft-set. Press a **gummy body part** (find them at Wal-Mart or in the seasonal sections of other large retailers) into each cube; refrigerate until firm.

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Hidden Object
Find the PITCHFORK

You could win a copy of the *2011 Holidays & Celebrations Cookbook*, which features more than 350 new recipes, party planning ideas, decorating tips and more. From elegant Christmas feasts to grand graduation parties, this cookbook has something for every occasion.

Go to **tasteofhome.com** to enter; 100 winners will be drawn from entries with the correct answer. Or mail a postcard with the page number and your name, address and phone number to Hide & Seek, *Taste of Home*, 5400 S. 60th St., Greendale WI 53129. Winners are drawn at random.

In our August/September issue, the peanut butter jar was hidden on page 44 in the Thin Crust Pizza Dough.

Great Find
Pumpkin-palooza

The folks behind the Pumpkin Festival in Keene, New Hampshire, say they have the largest assembly of carved pumpkins in the world. Who's to doubt them, with 25,000-plus pumpkins and more than 50,000 spectators each year? Carved pumpkins adorn the town's Main Street, leading to a gigantic tower of pumpkins watching over the festival. Besides loads of jack-o'-lanterns, you'll find great food, a children's costume parade, shopping and a celebration of all things autumnal. This year's festival will be held on Saturday, October 22. For more information, visit **pumpkinfestival2011.org**.

One for the Books
The Lexicon of Real American Food
by Jane and Michael Stern

Do you know what "hoppel poppel" is, why chop suey is actually American or the difference between pizza and apizza? If not, dig into the latest from veteran food writers (and *Taste of Home* columnists!) Jane and Michael Stern for the answers. *The Lexicon of Real American Food* provides insight into America's regional specialties, their quirky names and stories and, most importantly, where to find them and how to make them. Food enthusiasts, rejoice! **roadfood.com**, *$13*

Taste Our App!

Bring *Taste of Home* to your phone or other mobile device. The new *Taste of Home* app features thousands of seasonal and holiday recipes, suggestions for easy weeknight meals and more. Available for both Apple and Android devices at **tasteofhome.com/mobile** ■

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open house

BRIGHT IDEAS for welcoming friends & family into your home

Take a Peek! This artistically designed space shows off simple ways to introduce a little color—and whimsy—to the kitchen.

Sensibility Meets Modern Style

A little love and a lot of stainless steel give an outdated kitchen a streamlined new look

BY **RENEE SCHETTLER ROSSI**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **JEREMY SAMUELSON**
STYLED BY **DARA SAMUELSON**

Home Cooking Staci Williams, left, designed a kitchen where her family, including son, Rocco, and mom, Robbi Bell, love to gather.

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When Staci Williams and her husband, Tyler, began house hunting in Pleasant Grove, Utah, two years ago, she knew exactly what she wanted in a kitchen. The only hitch was finding it.

"We have a very minimal aesthetic," says Staci. "We had a difficult time finding something that fit our sense of style. We wanted our entire home to be a place that inspires creativity. And each of us requires a very clean, clutter-free space in which to think and be inspired."

They eventually fell in love with the open floor plan and copious natural light of their current home. "I remember thinking, *I have a view of the entire house while standing at the stovetop*," she says. "And I loved that."

But the kitchen held a few surprises. The layout was, in a word, inefficient. There was no pantry for storage, the appliances were outdated and the crude, flimsy cabinets were made from plywood and painted what Staci calls a "gross" shade of green. The couple decided the kitchen needed a little love and a lot of stainless steel.

OPENING UP

The Williamses gutted the space, leaving only the picture window and five-burner stovetop, and designed with openness in mind. They chose below-the-counter cabinets, except for one upper one tucked away in a corner. "It was interesting to figure out the best way to work," says Staci, who was accustomed to ample cabinets extending to the ceilings.

Yet she realized that much of her old storage space was difficult to reach. "I thought I was really going to miss having storage space above," says Staci. "I've learned a lot about how I can be more efficient."

The couple also converted the wasted space next to the double oven into a walk-in pantry, which offsets the reduction in cabinets. And they cleverly installed a wraparound shelf at counter height in the pantry, complete with outlets for the toaster, blender and other small appliances that would otherwise clutter the kitchen counters. "We worked very hard to make it very functional," says Staci.

NATURAL BEAUTY

Today, the kitchen mirrors the rest of the house with its contemporary art gallery aesthetic, emphasizing clean lines and a discerning use of color. Light oak floors extend throughout the kitchen and adjoining areas, creating a sense of continuity and openness. Pale cork countertops clean up easily and complement both the light flooring and the sleek black cabinetry. A stainless steel backsplash and switch plates echo the look of the appliances. And the windows are fit with hideaway shades, rather than blinds or curtains, so as not to obscure the kitchen's natural light—or the couple's minimalist mojo.

Everything In Its Place Even a minimalist approach affords space for play. Clockwise from below right: An open kitchen lets Staci keep an eye on Rocco; a graphic tea set **(crateandbarrel.com)** doubles as a conversation starter; boldly colored pots **(cactusandtropicals.com)** stand in as alternatives to flowers.

A Modern Feel New appliances were a must. The Williamses opted for a stainless steel Jenn-Air set to fit the kitchen's style.

HAVE A GREAT KITCHEN? We'd love to see it! Send photos (including "before" shots if it's a remodel) plus a family photo to **editors@tasteofhome.com**. If we feature your kitchen, you'll receive **$250**.

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Picture Perfect The family added a wow factor by enlarging a photo onto canvas. An online resource, such as **picaboo.com**, makes it easy to do.

Bringing Nature Inside Shunning blinds or curtains for shades emphasizes natural light and minimizes clutter.

At the Ready A five-burner stovetop helps Staci cook for a crowd with ease.

Naturally Yours A durable quartz countertop is easy on upkeep.

Take a Seat Clear barstools are as inviting as they are sleek. They give little Rocco the opportunity to leave his design on the kitchen in the form of tiny fingerprints.

"We wanted our home to be a place that inspires creativity. And each of us requires a very clean, clutter-free space in which to think and be inspired."

—**STACI WILLIAMS** PLEASANT GROVE, UTAH

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That openness enables Staci to keep an eye on her son, Rocco, now almost 2, and allows her to be a part of the conversation during the frequent dinner parties they host. Cool, contemporary bar stools at the counter encourage guests to congregate near the kitchen. "That's the first place people go," says Staci. "They just gravitate toward the stools."

But the kitchen's most efficient element is the one thing Staci and Tyler didn't design: the five-burner stovetop. "I'm able to cook more things at the same time," explains Staci. "I no longer have to read through the recipes and think, *OK, I need to time this so I can cook that ahead of time and then heat it up again later.*"

The kitchen redo reflects the couple's style as well as their sensibility. "I wanted someplace where I was going to work comfortably and not feel overwhelmed," says Staci. "The minimal design allows me to create in the kitchen without hindrance. Which means the mess I make while cooking is the only clutter around!" ■

YOUR TRUE COLORS

Here's a cheat sheet on how to make even a modern kitchen feel like home.

1. **Enjoy art every day.** Even something as practical as a clock, such as the bold Arti & Mestieri version seen at left, adds visual interest and drama to a small space.
2. **Personalize with photos.** Pictures capture not just the people you love, but the emotion of a moment. Surround yourself with colorful memories framed simply.
3. **Play up the practical.** Make kitchen essentials multitask as splashes of color. Think vibrant orange water bottles. Spatulas and spoons in neon hues. Plant holders in every shade imaginable besides terra-cotta. Clocks as conversation starters.
4. **Don't overthink things.** It's OK to let go of a strict palette and embrace pleasingly mismatched moments of color—and whimsy.

Add pops of color to B&W prints with photo editing software.

MORE ONLINE:
See what the Williamses' kitchen used to look like at **tasteofhome.com/kitchentour**

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A Family of Friends

New arrivals on the block soon become part of a **cherished neighborhood tradition,** all because of a Sunday dinner | BY CHERYL STERNMAN RULE

My husband and I moved to San Jose, California, in 2004 knowing exactly two adults—each other. All that soon changed when our neighbor Sheila Billings invited us to a Sunday dinner at her home.

There, we met three other families who also lived on our block. Over a great meal and easy conversation, a new tradition was born.

Each Sunday, we began to gather at one another's homes for grilled meats, pasta, salad, fruit and loaves of warm bread. The wide variety of food was a draw, for sure, as was the fact that no one family shouldered the burden of making the full meal. But the food was only part of why we came together: The fellowship we shared and the sense of community we created among ourselves was the real backbone of our tradition.

A few years after we began, Sheila's family moved and I wondered (and worried) if our get-togethers would still continue. Happily, they did. Our increasingly hectic schedules mean we gather only once a month now instead of every week, but our Sunday dinners live on.

I especially like the way my neighbor Andrea Mello describes what we do. "Every few Sundays we know we can break bread together," she says. "It represents continuity for all of us." And without continuity we couldn't have community.

Cheryl Sternman Rule is the face behind the food blog *5 Second Rule*, **5secondrule.typepad.com**. Her first cookbook, *Ripe*, is due out in 2012.

Chicken & Dumplings

After a very long week, comfort food called to me, so I made this meal on a whim. Rotisserie chicken drastically cuts the prep time, so we don't have to wait long for this dish to be ready.
—**JESSICA REHS** CUYAHOGA FALLS, OHIO

PREP: 25 MIN. • **COOK:** 35 MIN.
YIELD: 6 SERVINGS

- **6 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth**
- **3 bay leaves**
- **5 fresh thyme sprigs**
- **4 garlic cloves, peeled**
- **1 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes**
- **1 cup chopped carrots**
- **1 cup chopped celery**
- **3 Tbsp. olive oil**
- **2 Tbsp. butter**
- **3 garlic cloves, minced**
- **2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour**
- **1 cup frozen peas**
- **1 rotisserie chicken, shredded**
- **¼ cup heavy whipping cream**

DUMPLINGS:

- **2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 Tbsp. baking powder**
- **1 tsp. salt**
- **1 tsp. cayenne pepper**
- **1 cup buttermilk**
- **2 eggs, lightly beaten**
- **¼ cup minced chives**

1. In a large saucepan, combine the first five ingredients. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 30 minutes. Strain and set aside.
2. In a Dutch oven, saute carrots and celery in oil and butter until tender. Add minced garlic; cook 1 minute longer. Stir in flour until blended; gradually add prepared broth. Bring to a boil; cook 2 minutes or until thickened, stirring frequently.
3. Add peas; return to a boil. Cook 3 to 5 minutes or until peas are tender. Stir in chicken and cream; heat through.
4. For dumplings, combine the flour, baking powder, salt and cayenne in a large bowl. In another bowl, combine buttermilk and eggs; stir into dry ingredients just until moistened.
5. Drop by tablespoonfuls onto simmering chicken mixture. Cover and simmer for 15-20 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in a dumpling comes out clean (do not lift cover while simmering). Garnish with chives before serving.

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Lemon Dijon Dressing

The lemon juice and Dijon mustard give this super-fast salad dressing a nice tang that's balanced by a hint of sweetness. Try it on spinach salad or mixed greens with cucumbers and tomatoes.

—**BRYAN BRAACK** ELDRIDGE, IOWA

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 10 MIN. • **YIELD:** ABOUT 1 CUP

- ½ cup lemon juice
- ⅓ cup light corn syrup
- ¼ cup canola oil
- 1 Tbsp. finely chopped red onion
- 2 tsp. Dijon mustard
- ½ tsp. salt

1. Place all ingredients in a jar with a tight-fitting lid; shake well. Just before serving, shake dressing and drizzle over salad; toss to coat.

Greek Spice Cake

This recipe has been in my family for as long as I can remember. My dad and now my husband always request it for their birthday cake. When you bake it, the aroma of cinnamon and cloves fills the kitchen.

—**HEATHER ABEL** HALE CENTER, TEXAS

PREP: 25 MIN. • **BAKE:** 50 MIN. + COOLING
YIELD: 12 SERVINGS

- 1 Tbsp. shortening
- 2 Tbsp. plus 2½ cups all-purpose flour, divided
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 cup canola oil
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 3 eggs
- 1 Tbsp. vanilla extract
- 1½ tsp. almond extract
- 1½ tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp. ground cloves
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1 tsp. confectioners' sugar

1. Grease 10-in. fluted pan with shortening; lightly coat with 2 Tbsp. flour. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl, beat the sugars, oil, buttermilk, eggs and extracts until well blended. Combine the remaining flour, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, cloves and baking soda; gradually beat into the sugar mixture until blended. Stir in pecans.
3. Transfer to prepared pan. Bake at 325° for 50-60 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean.
4. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely. Dust with confectioners' sugar.

Dill Green Beans

I love this healthful alternative to crunchy, salty snacks like potato chips. They're addictive and easy. Or try them warmed up and served as a side dish.

—**ALLISON GRAY** FREEPORT, MAINE

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 20 MIN. • **YIELD:** 4 SERVINGS

- 1 lb. fresh green beans, trimmed
- ¼ cup rice vinegar
- ¼ cup reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 2 Tbsp. snipped fresh dill
- 1 Tbsp. sesame seeds, optional

1. Place beans in a steamer basket; place in a large saucepan over 1 in. of water. Bring to a boil; cover and steam for 6-8 minutes or until crisp-tender.
2. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, combine the vinegar, soy sauce, dill and sesame seeds if desired. Transfer beans to a serving bowl. Add vinegar mixture and toss to coat. ■

LET'S EAT!

What makes Sunday dinners special at your house? Share your story or recipes. Write to **editors@tasteofhome.com** and put Sunday in the subject line.

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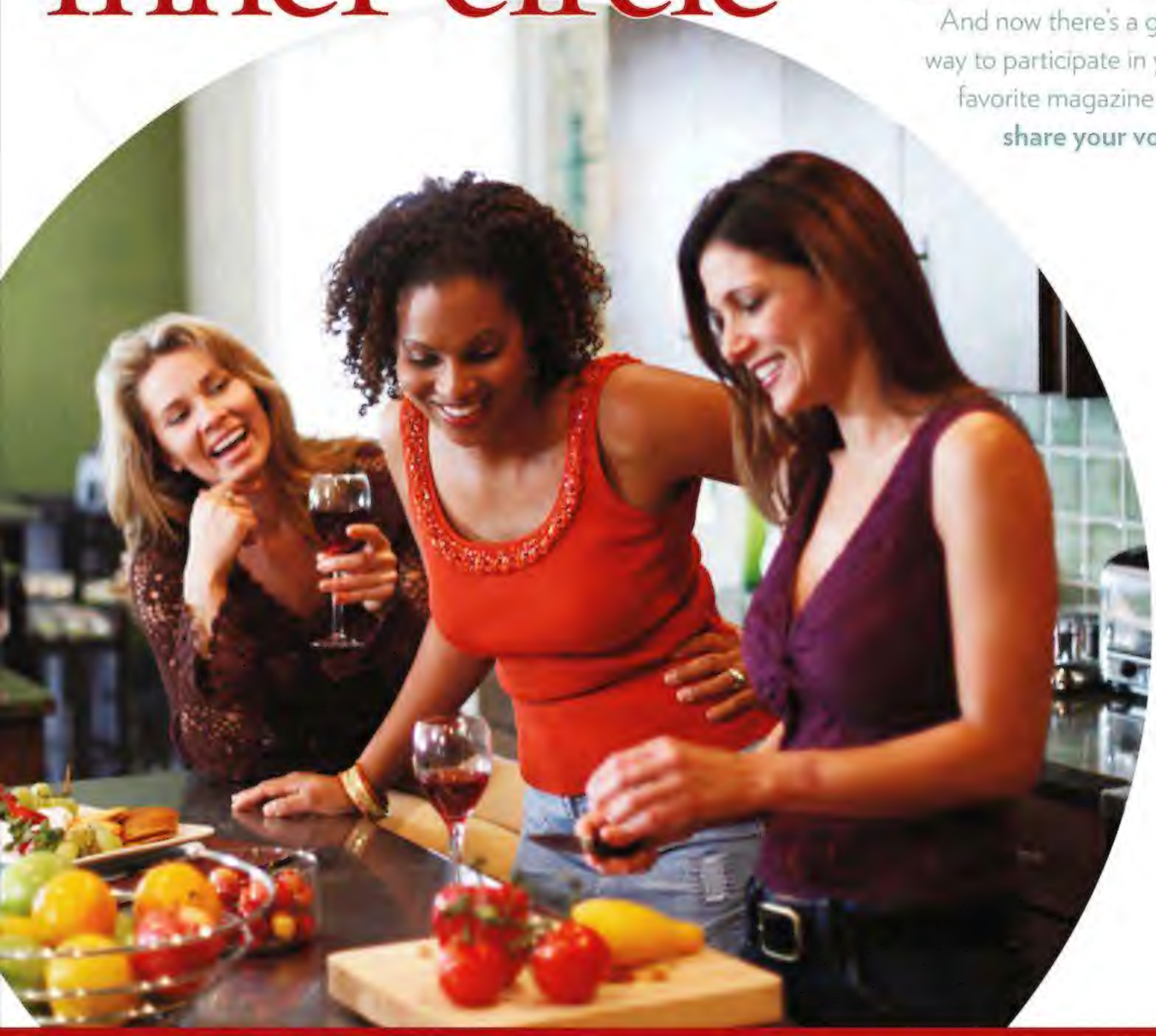

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Passport to *Fun*

The **party food standby**—loaded nachos—turns into a **fusion feast** with ethnic ingredients

BITES OF WOW

Take your taste buds on a happy trip with snacks inspired by flavors from around the world.

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1 Islander Nachos

Travel to the tropics without leaving home. Of course, pineapple, coconut and macadamia nuts are involved.
—JENNIFER HEASLEY YORK, PENNSYLVANIA

PREP: 40 MIN. • **BAKE:** 10 MIN. + COOLING
YIELD: 16 SERVINGS

- **⅓ cup plus 1 Tbsp. sugar, divided**
- **2 tsp. ground cinnamon**
- **⅓ cup honey**
- **¼ cup butter, cubed**
- **8 flour tortillas (8 in.)**
- **4 oz. cream cheese, softened**
- **1 tsp. vanilla extract**
- **1 container (8 oz.) frozen whipped topping, thawed**
- **½ cup drained crushed pineapple**
- **4 medium bananas, sliced**
- **1 cup flaked coconut, toasted**
- **½ cup chopped macadamia nuts, toasted**

1. In a small bowl, combine ⅓ cup sugar and cinnamon; set aside. In a small saucepan, combine honey and butter. Cook and stir over medium heat until blended. Brush onto both sides of tortillas; sprinkle tops with sugar mixture.
2. Stack tortillas, top sides up; cut into sixths. Arrange wedges, sugared sides up, in a single layer on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 400° for 6-8 minutes or until crisp and golden brown. Cool completely on wire racks.
3. In a large bowl, beat cream cheese, vanilla and remaining sugar until creamy. Beat in whipped topping until blended. Fold in pineapple. Arrange tortilla wedges on a large serving platter. Spoon cream cheese mixture over wedges. Top with bananas, coconut and macadamias. Serve immediately.

2 Beer and Brats Nachos

Head to the Midwest for the big game with a platter full of these snacks enlivened with a beer-splashed cheese sauce.
—KELLY BOE WHITELAND, INDIANA

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 30 MIN.
YIELD: 12 SERVINGS

- **1 pkg. (14 oz.) fully cooked smoked bratwurst links, sliced**
- **2¼ cups frozen pepper and onion stir-fry blend**
- **3 cups (12 oz.) shredded cheddar cheese**
- **2½ tsp. all-purpose flour**
- **1 cup chopped onion**
- **1 Tbsp. olive oil**
- **1 garlic clove, minced**
- **¾ cup beer or beef broth**
- **12 cups tortilla chips**

1. In a large skillet, saute bratwurst for 1 minute. Add stir-fry blend; cook 3-5 minutes longer or until vegetables are tender. Set aside and keep warm.
2. In a bowl, combine cheese and flour. In a saucepan, saute onion in oil until tender. Add garlic; cook 1 minute. Stir in beer; heat over medium heat until bubbles form around sides of pan.
3. Reduce heat to medium-low; add a handful of cheese mixture. Stir constantly until nearly melted. Continue adding cheese, one handful at a time, allowing cheese to almost completely melt between additions.
4. Arrange tortilla chips on a serving platter. Spoon cheese mixture over chips. Top with bratwurst mixture.

3 Sicilian Nachos

This hearty Italy-inspired appetizer easily doubles as a main dish.
—SONYA LABBE LOS ANGELES

PREP: 20 MIN. • **COOK:** 35 MIN.
YIELD: 12 SERVINGS

- **1 lb. ground beef**
- **1 small red onion, finely chopped**
- **1 small carrot, finely chopped**
- **4 garlic cloves, minced**
- **¾ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes**
- **½ cup dry red wine or beef broth**
- **1 can (15 oz.) crushed tomatoes, undrained**
- **1 can (8 oz.) tomato sauce**
- **½ cup vegetable broth**
- **1 bay leaf**
- **¼ tsp. salt**
- **¼ tsp. pepper**
- **2 Tbsp. minced fresh basil or 2 tsp. dried basil**
- **48 slices French bread baguette (¼ in. thick)**
- **2 garlic cloves, halved**
- **⅓ cup olive oil**
- **1 cup shaved Parmesan cheese**

1. In a skillet, cook the first five ingredients over medium heat until beef is no longer pink; drain. Add wine, stirring to loosen browned bits.
2. Stir in tomatoes, tomato sauce, broth, bay leaf, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 20-25 minutes or until thick. Discard bay leaf. Stir in basil.
3. Rub baguette slices with garlic halves; place on ungreased baking sheets. Brush with oil. Bake at 400° for 3-5 minutes or until the baguette slices are lightly browned.
4. Arrange slices on serving platters; top with beef mixture and cheese. Serve immediately.

4 Mediterranean Nachos

For a zesty version of nachos, top crisped pita wedges with ground lamb or beef, feta cheese and a creamy cucumber sauce.
—ZAZA FULLMAN-KASL VENTURA, CALIFORNIA

PREP: 30 MIN.+ STANDING • **COOK:** 15 MIN.
YIELD: 12 SERVINGS

- **2 medium cucumbers, peeled, seeded and grated**
- **1½ tsp. salt, divided**
- **½ tsp. ground cumin**
- **½ tsp. ground coriander**
- **½ tsp. paprika**
- **¾ tsp. pepper, divided**
- **6 whole pita breads (6-in.)**
- **Cooking spray**
- **1 lb. ground lamb or beef**
- **2 garlic cloves, minced**
- **1 tsp. cornstarch**
- **½ cup beef broth**
- **2 cups plain Greek yogurt**
- **2 Tbsp. lemon juice**
- **¼ tsp. grated lemon peel**
- **2 cups torn romaine**
- **2 medium tomatoes, seeded and chopped**
- **½ cup pitted Greek olives, sliced**
- **4 green onions, thinly sliced**
- **½ cup crumbled feta cheese**

1. In a colander set over a bowl, toss cucumbers with ½ tsp. salt. Let stand 30 minutes. Squeeze and pat dry. Set aside. In a small bowl, combine the cumin, coriander, paprika, ½ tsp. pepper and ½ tsp. salt; set aside.
2. Cut each pita into eight wedges; arrange in a single layer on ungreased baking sheets. Spritz pitas with cooking spray; sprinkle with ¾ tsp. seasoning mix. Broil 3-4 in. from the heat for 3-4 minutes on each side.
3. In a skillet, cook lamb, garlic and remaining seasoning mix over medium heat until lamb is no longer pink; drain. Combine cornstarch and broth; stir into pan. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thick.
4. In a bowl, combine yogurt, lemon juice, lemon peel, cucumbers and remaining salt and pepper. Arrange pitas on a platter. Layer lettuce, lamb, tomatoes, olives, onions and cheese in a pita. Serve with cucumber sauce. ■

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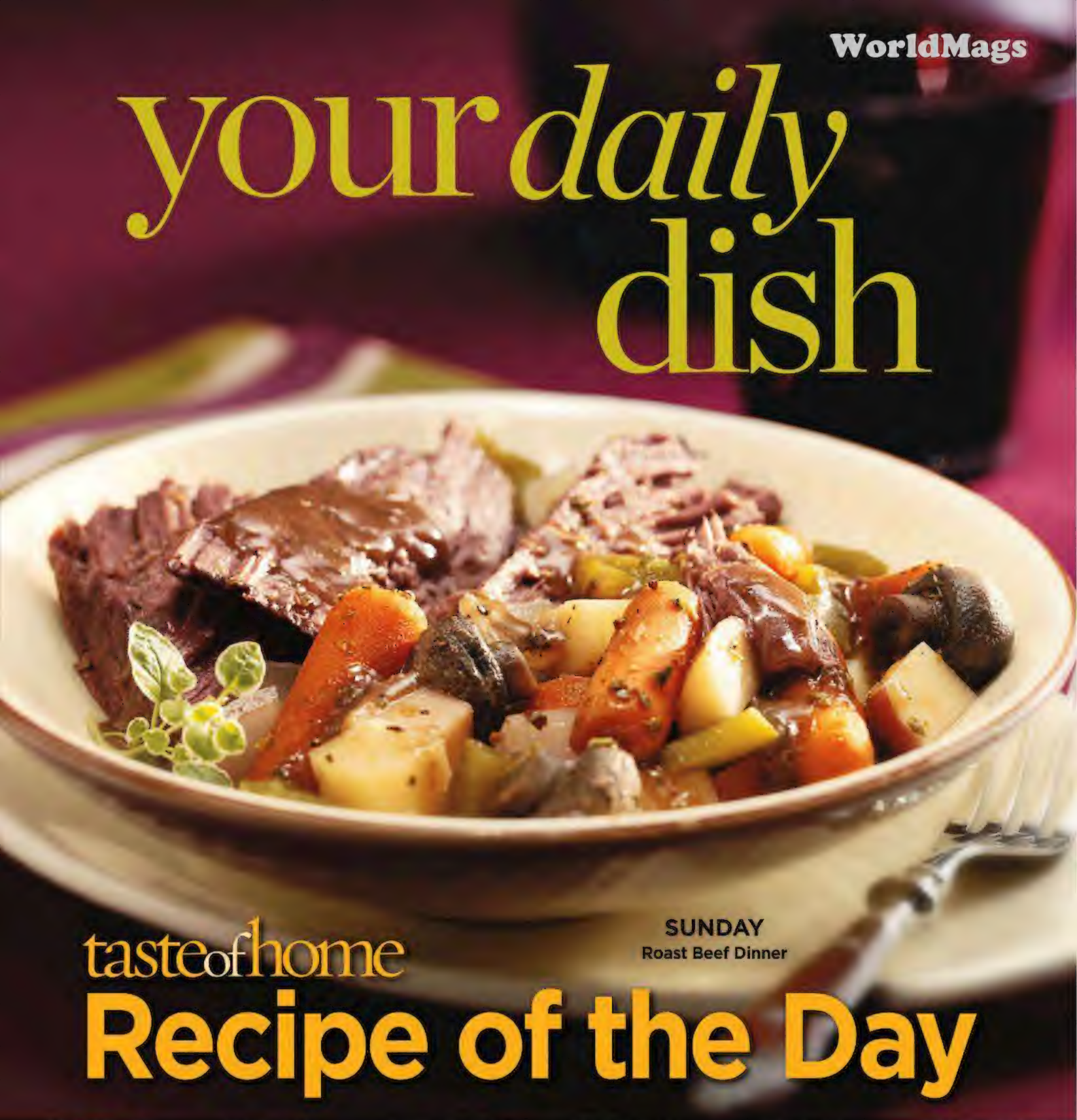
your daily dish



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KC Quaretti-Lee
This French Apple Cake is a simple but stunning dessert.

Taking the Fork in the Road

Culinary **exploration** leads this Florida resident to broaden her palate and create **winning dishes**

For KC Quaretti-Lee of Venice, Florida, cooking has always been a way to explore new cuisines. And since winning a top prize in the Real Women of Philadelphia Casting Competition, it's also been a doorway to new experiences.

"I'm a passionate home cook with more years in the kitchen than I care to admit," says KC. "Years ago, I started asking my husband to make cooking videos of me for fun. When this contest came up, I was ready to break out the video camera again and demonstrate one of my favorite dessert recipes, a simple yet rich French Apple Cake. Now I've made numerous videos for the Real Women of Philadelphia website and have built so many friendships."

While KC's mom wasn't an adept cook, she laid the foundation for her daughter's passion for creating in the kitchen. "Our family dinners centered around meat, potatoes and canned veggies," says KC. "She did enjoy baking pies and cookies. In fact, the best pie my husband ever had is Mom's wild blackberry pie. I guess she passed her dessert genes on to me!"

KC's mother also encouraged her daughter's inventive nature in the kitchen, letting her play chef with pantry ingredients. "When I was a child, I'd make up pancake recipes on weekends with nothing more than flour and water and a few odds and ends. Since then, the kitchen has been a special place for me."

That sentiment has held true no matter where her kitchen was located. "I've lived many places, from Tacoma, Washington, to Malibu, California, and on to the south of France for 11 years and now Venice, Florida. Each place offered its own kind of food and local specialties, and I learned about them all," says KC. While living in France, she even wrote a cookbook updating traditional recipes.

KC's winning dessert, featured here, can also be found at **realwomenofphiladelphia.com**.

French Apple Cake

This is a traditional apple cake with a twist: the addition of cream cheese. You can use pears or peaches instead of the apples.
—KC QUARETTI-LEE VENICE, FLORIDA

PREP: 45 MIN. • **BAKE:** 35 MIN.
YIELD: 8 SLICES

- **1½ cups sugar, divided**
- **4 tsp. water**
- **4 tsp. lemon juice**
- **3 cups sliced apples**
- **3 eggs**
- **1 cup butter, melted**
- **4 oz. Philadelphia Cream Cheese, cubed and softened**
- **1 cup all-purpose flour**

OPTIONAL TOPPING:

- **1 cup heavy whipping cream**
- **1 tub (8 oz.) Philadelphia Honey Nut Flavor Cream Cheese Spread**
- **¼ cup confectioners' sugar**

1. In a small heavy skillet, combine ¾ cup sugar and water. Cook, without stirring, until amber, about 25 minutes. Stir in lemon juice and quickly pour into 10-in. springform pan, coating bottom. Arrange apple slices on caramel in circular overlapping pattern.
2. In a bowl, beat eggs and remaining sugar until blended. Beat in butter, then cream cheese until smooth. Stir in flour. Spread over apples.
3. Bake at 350° for 35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near center comes out clean. Cool 5 minutes. Carefully run a knife around edge of pan to loosen; remove sides of pan. Invert onto a serving plate.
4. If topping is desired, beat cream until soft peaks form. Separately, beat cream cheese spread and confectioners' sugar until smooth. Gradually fold in whipped cream. Serve with warm cake. ■

Learn to fly in the kitchen

Try these tips from KC Quaretti-Lee.

- **Seize every opportunity.** Step outside your comfort zone and take chances. This is true not only in the kitchen, but in life.
- **Travel.** I was a child when I began cooking, but my real sense of culinary adventure started when I discovered flavors from around the world. If you can't leave the country, get a taste of other cultures by cooking ethnic foods.

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◀ Bones & Blood

▼ Black & White Spider Cookies

Flick or Treat

Stage the ultimate Halloween movie night: We created **terrifyingly good treats** inspired by **classic horror films!** Happy haunting!

RECIPES DEVELOPED BY *TASTE OF HOME* FOOD STYLISTS

◀ Eyes-Wide-Open Espresso Cookies

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All Hallows' Eve and scary movies go together like trolls and rocks, vampires and necks, werewolves and full moons. Two more things that go together: Your friends and this party plan based on a captivating array of frights and bites.

Eyes-Wide-Open Espresso Cookies

You'll be afraid to go to sleep after watching gruesome dream-stalker Freddy Krueger in *A Nightmare on Elm Street*. So go ahead and munch away on these coffee-laced chocolate cookies. You'll need them.

PREP: 25 MIN. • **BAKE:** 10 MIN./BATCH
YIELD: 45 COOKIES

- **½ cup butter, softened**
- **½ cup sugar**
- **¼ cup packed brown sugar**
- **1 egg**
- **1¼ cups all-purpose flour**
- **6 Tbsp. baking cocoa**
- **2 tsp. finely ground espresso beans**
- **½ tsp. baking soda**
- **¼ tsp. salt**
- **1 cup (6 oz.) semisweet chocolate chips**
- **45 chocolate-covered coffee beans**

1. In a large bowl, cream the butter and sugars until light and fluffy. Beat in egg. Combine the flour, cocoa, espresso beans, baking soda and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in chocolate chips.
2. Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls 2 in. apart onto parchment-lined baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes or until surface cracks. Immediately press a coffee bean into the center of each cookie. Cool for 2 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks. Store in an airtight container.

Black & White Spider Cookies

These cookies are the charming (and delicious) version of the prolific eight-legged creatures that annihilated a town in the 1990s film *Arachnophobia*.

PREP: 45 MIN. • **BAKE:** 10 MIN./BATCH + STANDING • **YIELD:** 2½ DOZEN

- **1 pkg. (18¼ oz.) yellow cake mix**
- **2 eggs**
- **½ cup water**

ICING:

- **¾ cup water**
- **⅓ cup light corn syrup**
- **7½ cups confectioners' sugar**
- **1½ tsp. vanilla extract**
- **3 oz. unsweetened chocolate, melted**
- **4 to 5 Tbsp. warm water, optional**

1. In a large bowl, combine the cake mix, eggs and water; beat on low speed for 30 seconds. Beat on medium for 2 minutes.
2. Drop by rounded tablespoonfuls 3 in. apart onto greased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 8-10 minutes or until edges begin to brown. Cool for 2 minutes before removing to wire racks to cool completely.
3. In a large heavy saucepan, combine water and corn syrup; bring just to a boil over medium heat. Remove from the heat. Stir in confectioners' sugar and vanilla until smooth.
4. Place melted chocolate and 2 cups of the icing in a small bowl; whisk until smooth. Stir in warm water, 1 Tbsp. at a time, as necessary to make a thin spreading consistency.
5. Spread chocolate icing over half of each cookie. Spread vanilla icing over the other half. Let stand until set. Cover remaining icings; set aside.
6. Cut a small hole in the corner of pastry or plastic bag; insert #2 round pastry tip. Fill the bag with remaining vanilla icing; pipe a spider web on the chocolate half of each cookie.
7. Fill bag with remaining chocolate icing as directed above; pipe spiders on cookies. Let stand until set. Store in an airtight container.

Bones & Blood

The zombies of *Dawn of the Dead* sure like 'em, and now you will, too. This combination of cookies and dip leaves you desperate for more. Fight nicely over them—no biting!

PREP: 45 MIN. • **BAKE:** 25 MIN./BATCH + COOLING • **YIELD:** 40 COOKIES (2 CUPS SAUCE)

- **5 egg whites**
- **½ cup cake flour**
- **½ cup ground almonds**
- **¼ tsp. ground cinnamon**
- **⅛ tsp. ground cloves**
- **⅛ tsp. ground nutmeg**
- **1 tsp. vanilla extract**
- **¼ tsp. cream of tartar**
- **Dash salt**
- **4 drops yellow food coloring, optional**
- **¾ cup plus 2 Tbsp. sugar**

SAUCE:

- **1¼ cups heavy whipping cream**
- **½ cup semisweet chocolate chips**
- **½ cup strawberry jelly**
- **Red food coloring, optional**

1. Place egg whites in a large bowl; let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, combine the flour, almonds, cinnamon, cloves and nutmeg.
2. Add the vanilla, cream of tartar, salt and food coloring, if desired, to the egg whites. Beat on medium speed until soft peaks form. Gradually add sugar, 1 Tbsp. at a time, beating on high until stiff glossy peaks form and the sugar is dissolved. Fold in flour mixture.
3. Cut a ½-in. hole in the corner of a pastry or plastic bag. Fill bag with egg white mixture. Pipe 4-in. logs onto parchment-lined baking sheets. Pipe two ½-in. balls at both ends of each log. Bake at 300° for 25-30 minutes or until firm to the touch. Remove to wire racks. Store in an airtight container.
4. In a small microwave-safe bowl, combine the cream, chocolate chips and jelly. Microwave on high in 30-second intervals until melted; stir until smooth. Tint red if desired. Cool to room temperature and serve with bones. Refrigerate leftover sauce.

MORE ONLINE:
For more Halloween recipes and costume ideas, visit **tasteofhome.com/halloween**

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Witches' Brew

Tormenting witch sisters in *Hocus Pocus* stir up trouble as well as a bewitching potion. Our bubbly concoction's powers of temptation come from its great taste.

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 20 MIN.
YIELD: 6 SERVINGS

- **1 cup sugar**
- **1 cup water**
- **8 medium kiwifruit, peeled and quartered**
- **½ cup fresh mint leaves**
- **Green food coloring, optional**
- **1 cup vodka, optional**
- **1 liter ginger ale, chilled**
- **Ice cubes**

1. In a small saucepan, bring sugar and water to a boil. Cook and stir until sugar is dissolved; set aside to cool.
2. Place the kiwi, mint and sugar syrup in a blender; cover and process until blended. Tint green if desired. Pour into a large pitcher; stir in vodka if desired. Refrigerate until chilled.
3. Just before serving, stir in ginger ale. Serve over ice.

Witches' Brooms

Cut **1 green shoestring licorice** into 1-in. lengths. Arrange around end of **1 pretzel rod** to form broom bristles; tightly wrap bristles with **1 piece black shoestring licorice**, tucking in end to secure. ***Yield: 1 broom.***

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Cupcake Mummy

Much like *The Mummy* movie, these cupcakes—wrapped in white frosting—are cursed! It's impossible to stop eating the spooky sweets once you take that first bite. Beware!

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 30 MIN.
YIELD: 6 SERVINGS

- **1 can (16 oz.) vanilla frosting**
- **6 vanilla cupcakes**
- **8 to 12 large marshmallows, cut into pieces**
- **Baking cocoa and crushed chocolate wafers**

1. Frost tops of cupcakes. Arrange on a covered cake board, forming a mummy. Place marshmallow pieces on cupcakes. Insert tip #46 into a pastry bag; fill with frosting. Pipe long bands across the mummy, creating bandages.
2. Dust mummy with cocoa; sprinkle cake board with crushed wafers.

SCREAM Team

We called in our cupcake-obsessed buddies, Karen Tack and Alan Richardson, to dream up a special dessert celebrating both a favorite flick and the release of their latest cookbook, *Cupcakes, Cookies, and Pie, Oh My!* (available in February 2012).

Karen and Alan's Cupcaking Tips

- This configuration lends itself to creating a **variety of figures**, from Count Dracula to a bride or a sailor.
- If you create a cupcake that needs a face, try to give it **lots of personality**. We look in children's books, online, or at cartoons to find ways to get the right expressions. Use small candies, such as M&M Minis, sprinkles and chocolate chips to give your creations facial features or decorative emphasis. ■

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No punch bowl? Use an oversized wide-mouth jar and add a long-handled ladle. Dress up apple cider by floating thick slices of apple on top. If you like it bubbly, add club soda to taste.

Candled Apples
Carve hole in firm apple. Brush with lemon juice. Insert candle.

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THE AFFECTION FOR APPLES

Our children are **the apples of our eyes**, and if they're apple-cheeked, it's an indication they're healthy, no doubt because an apple a day has **kept the doctor away**, a wholesome practice that is, of course, as **American as apple pie**. Our culture has no other food so deeply ingrained—**and so thoroughly enjoyed**. These fresh new recipes showcase apples' versatility while remaining comfortingly familiar. You might even say they **don't fall far from the tree.** | BY CHERYL STERNMAN RULE

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Everyone who has, at some point in life, climbed up into the branches of an apple tree knows exactly what American writer Henry David Thoreau meant when he said, "Surely the apple is the noblest of fruits." Our fondness for this fall delight was inherited from our ancestors—who crossed the Atlantic with seeds on wooden ships—and took them along as we trekked across a new continent. Yet even though we have long lived with apples, we continue to find new ways to refresh our relationship with this crispest of fruits, as you'll see from this truly remarkable collection of sweet and savory dishes created by *Taste of Home* readers from across the nation.

Give **Grilled Apple Pizza** a try and you'll see how versatile your favorite fruit can really be. Enjoy some **Chunky Applesauce** (top it with yogurt) as you sip your morning coffee. Try a crisp and creamy **Apple, Blue Cheese & Bibb Salad**. Or present your family with a traditional **Apple Orchard Pork Roast**. And nothing caps off the night like a warm piece of **Crumb Topped Apple Pie**.

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Apple Orchard Pork Roast

Onions and apples meld perfectly to make a sweet and savory experience out of this easygoing roast.
—VIKKI LEE GOLD RIVER, CALIFORNIA

PREP: 25 MIN. • **BAKE:** 1¼ HOURS + STANDING **YIELD:** 8 SERVINGS (1 CUP SAUCE)

- **1 boneless whole pork loin roast (3 to 4 lbs.)**
- **1 garlic clove, peeled and halved**
- **1 tsp. salt**
- **½ tsp. pepper**
- **6 fresh sage leaves**
- **3 fresh rosemary sprigs**
- **3 fresh thyme sprigs**
- **3 large tart apples, cut into wedges**
- **2 medium onions, cut into chunks**
- **4 garlic cloves, thinly sliced**
- **¼ cup butter, cubed**
- **1⅔ cups sparkling apple cider, divided**
- **1 Tbsp. soy sauce**
- **¼ cup sour cream**

1. Place roast in a shallow roasting pan; rub with garlic halves and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Top with herbs. Arrange the apples, onions and sliced garlic around roast; dot with butter. Combine 1 cup cider and soy sauce; pour over top.
2. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 1¼ to 1½ hours or until a meat thermometer reads 160°, basting occasionally with pan juices. Remove the roast, apples and onions to a serving platter; keep warm. Let stand for 10 minutes before slicing.
3. Meanwhile, skim fat from pan juices; transfer juices to a small saucepan. Add remaining cider. Bring to a boil. Remove from the heat; whisk in sour cream until smooth. Serve with pork.

Apple, Blue Cheese & Bibb Salad

Red or Golden Delicious apples add the bursting flavors of fall to this simple salad. A sprinkling of blue cheese and toasted walnuts makes it even more special.
—REBEKAH BEYER SABETHA, KANSAS

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 20 MIN.
YIELD: 9 SERVINGS

- **4 cups torn Bibb or Boston lettuce**
- **3 medium Red and/or Golden Delicious apples, chopped**
- **½ cup olive oil**
- **1 Tbsp. white balsamic vinegar or white wine vinegar**
- **1 Tbsp. honey**
- **1 Tbsp. mayonnaise**
- **½ tsp. mustard seed, toasted**
- **½ tsp. stone-ground mustard (whole grain)**
- **¼ tsp. salt**
- **⅛ tsp. coarsely ground pepper**
- **1 cup crumbled blue cheese**
- **¾ cup walnut halves, toasted**
- **½ cup golden raisins**

1. In a salad bowl, combine the lettuce and apples. In a small bowl, whisk the oil, vinegar, honey, mayonnaise, mustard seed, mustard, salt and pepper. Drizzle over salad and toss to coat. Sprinkle with cheese, walnuts and raisins. Serve immediately.

Chunky Applesauce

Start with tart apples to keep this version of homemade applesauce from becoming too sweet. Jonathan apples are especially good here.
—DEBORAH AMRINE FORT MYERS, FLORIDA

PREP: 15 MIN. • **COOK:** 30 MIN.
YIELD: ABOUT 3½ CUPS

- **8 cups chopped peeled tart apples (about 3½ lbs.)**
- **½ cup packed brown sugar**
- **1 tsp. ground cinnamon**
- **2 tsp. vanilla extract**

1. In a Dutch oven, combine apples, brown sugar and cinnamon. Cover and cook over medium-low heat for 30-40 minutes or until apples are tender, stirring occasionally. Remove from the heat; stir in vanilla. Mash apples slightly if desired. Serve warm or cold.

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Grilled Apple Pizza

Start with the fantastic basic pizza. Then try some options from our list of savory and sweet versions below.
—**R. SANDLIN** PRESCOTT VALLEY, ARIZONA

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 25 MIN.
YIELD: 2 PIZZAS (4 PIECES EACH).

- **5 medium tart apples, peeled and sliced**
- **4 Tbsp. butter, divided**
- **½ cup packed brown sugar**
- **1 tsp. ground cinnamon**
- **1 tube (13.8 oz.) refrigerated pizza crust**

1. In a large skillet, saute apples in 3 Tbsp. butter until crisp-tender. Stir in the brown sugar and cinnamon; keep warm.
2. Unroll pizza crust and cut lengthwise in half. In a microwave, melt remaining butter; brush onto both sides of crust.
3. Grill, covered, over medium heat for 1-3 minutes on each side or until lightly browned, rotating halfway through cooking to ensure an evenly browned crust. Remove from the grill. Top with apples.

Dress It Up

Get creative and pile all sorts of things on Grilled Apple Pizza. Here's a little inspiration.

1. **American Beauty:** Top apple pizza with arugula, cooked chopped bacon and shredded cheddar cheese.
2. **Fruity and Fab:** Top apple pizza with dried cranberries and drizzle with cream cheese frosting.
3. **French (in a good way):** Top apple pizza with sliced Brie cheese and sprigs of fresh or dried thyme.
4. **Turtle-Style:** Top apple pizza with chopped toasted pecans and caramel sauce.

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Hi, Hi, Miss American Pie

At first glance, **Virginia Floren Olson's** grocery list looks as if it's meant to feed a small village. It isn't. But it could. The 82-year-old West Des Moines, Iowa, baker uses 500 pounds of apples, 140 pounds each of flour and sugar, and 40 pounds of shortening every year when she fires up her holiday oven.

In October, Virginia starts making her list. Then, from Thanksgiving to Christmas she bakes up to 20 of her Crumb Topped Apple Pies per day, tallying about 500 pies. She also turns out oodles of cookies, bars and breads.

Although friends and family get their fair share, most of the goodies go to her son, Mike, a real estate appraiser who gives the pies to his clients. "People beg for them," Mike says. In case you were wondering—like the good son he is—Mike buys all the ingredients and pays his mom for her time.

And here's Virginia's special gift to you: Just in time for the holidays, she's sharing her recipe, *page 39* (thankfully scaled back to yield just one incredible pie instead of 500). —**ELIZABETH RUSSELL**

"Good apple pies are a considerable part of our domestic happiness."

—JANE AUSTEN

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Crumb Topped Apple Pie

This pie, with its buttery streusel topping, is such a hit that I make almost 20 of them a day through the holiday season. You can get a head start on the season by making the dough, rolling it out and placing it in pie pans, then freezing. Be sure to wrap the frozen pie dough securely.

—VIRGINIA FLOREN OLSON
WEST DES MOINES, IOWA

PREP: 45 MIN. + CHILLING • **BAKE:** 1 HOUR
YIELD: 8 SERVINGS

- **1¼ cups all-purpose flour**
- **½ tsp. salt**
- **½ cup shortening**
- **¼ cup cold water**

FILLING:

- **5 large tart apples, peeled and thinly sliced**
- **⅔ cup sugar**
- **5 tsp. all-purpose flour**
- **1¼ tsp. ground cinnamon**

TOPPING:

- **⅔ cup all-purpose flour**
- **½ cup sugar**
- **¼ cup cold butter**

1. In a large bowl, combine flour and salt; cut in the shortening until crumbly. Gradually add water, tossing with a fork until dough forms a ball. Wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 1 to 1½ hours or until easy to handle.
2. Roll out pastry to fit a 9-in. pie plate. Transfer pastry to pie plate. Trim pastry to ½ in. beyond edge of plate; flute edges.
3. For filling, place apples in crust. Combine the sugar, flour and cinnamon; sprinkle over apples.
4. For topping, combine flour and sugar in a small bowl; cut in butter until crumbly. Sprinkle over filling. Bake at 450° for 10 minutes. Reduce heat to 350°; bake 50-60 minutes longer or until topping is golden brown and filling is bubbly. Cool on a wire rack.

Bite-Size Apple Pies

These little bites of "wow" are so much fun for kids to make. Simply wrap strips of pastry around apple wedges and shake on some cinnamon-sugar. Bake and watch them disappear.

***—TASTE OF HOME* TEST KITCHEN**
GREENDALE, WISCONSIN

PREP: 20 MIN. • **BAKE:** 15 MIN.
YIELD: 16 SERVINGS

- **½ cup sugar**
- **2 tsp. ground cinnamon**
- **1 pkg. (14.1 oz.) refrigerated pie pastry**
- **3 Tbsp. butter, melted, divided**
- **2 medium tart apples, each cut into 8 wedges**

1. In a small bowl, combine sugar and cinnamon; set aside 1 Tbsp. On a lightly floured surface, unroll pastry. Brush with 2 Tbsp. butter; sprinkle with remaining sugar mixture.
2. Cut each sheet into eight 1-in. strips, about 8 in. long. Wrap one strip around each apple wedge, placing sugared side of pastry against the apple.
3. Place on parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Brush tops with remaining butter; sprinkle with reserved sugar mixture. Bake at 425° for 13-15 minutes or until pastry is golden brown. Serve warm. ■

MORE ONLINE:
For more quick recipes ready in 30 minutes or less, visit **tasteofhome.com/apples**

Prime Picking

Did you know October is National Apple Month? Take some time to gather friends and family and relish the all-American beauty of apple time in a local orchard. These are some of our favorites for a seasonal sensory treat.

Julian, California

East of San Diego, Julian owes its crisp mountain air to its 4,500-foot elevation, and its bustling October weekends to its vibrant apple orchards, some of them organic. During Julian Apple Days, the town goes all out with music, an old-fashioned staged melodrama and plenty of apple pie. ***For festival details, see* julianappledays.com*; for orchard info, see* julianca.com/orchards.**

Charlottesville, Virginia

Minutes from historic Monticello, stand atop Carter Mountain Orchard's 360-degree observation deck and marvel at the spectacular Blue Ridge Mountains. With an on-site winery, hayrides and U-pick orchards, this gem enjoys several thousand visitors each October weekend. ***The orchard is open daily 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. until Nov. 1, when shorter hours start,* cartermountainorchard.com.**

Bellingham, Washington

With 25,000 trees, BelleWood Acres is nestled between Puget Sound and the Chuckanut Mountain ridge in northwest Washington. After making your way along a breathtaking 45-minute scenic drive, taste the orchard's 18 apple varieties, enjoy an apple-bin train ride, or walk along the 10-mile creek. ***Open daily through Dec. 31, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.,* bellewoodapples.com.**

Bayfield, Wisconsin

Revered for its historic lighthouses and proximity to Lake Superior, Bayfield is home to the Bayfield Apple Festival, now in its 50th year. Antique barns, wildflowers and lovely acres of apple trees grace the landscape as you approach the festival, which draws more than 50,000 apple enthusiasts. ***The festival runs Oct. 7 to 9, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.,* bayfield.org.**

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Part of being the **best** is doing good.

Eggland's Best is proud to support Susan G. Komen for the Cure®. Together, we are fueling the best science, boldest community, and biggest impact in the fight against breast cancer. In addition to providing financial support, Eggland's Best will display Susan G. Komen for the Cure's running ribbon logo (along with a pink version of our "EB" stamp) on all of our eggs during the fall of 2011.

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cook smart

EASY SOLUTIONS from readers & our test kitchen

Clever Cubes

Don't ditch those last dabs and dribbles! They're **culinary gold** after a spell in the **deep freeze**

1. **Chopped onions** Save the day when dinner needs to get on the table fast. Simply freeze chopped onions in water; before cooking, thaw, drain and stir into just about anything.
2. **Chipotle peppers in adobo sauce** Thaw, then puree or chop and toss a cube or two into chili, salsa and marinades for a hint of smoky heat.
3. **Yogurt** Blend 3-4 frozen cubes into juice to make dynamite smoothies. Or insert a toothpick into each cube when it's partially frozen, and you'll have mini frozen pops in no time.
4. **Lemon and lime juice** Freeze leftover fresh juice so it's ready when you need a touch of tart.
5. **Tea** Ice cubes made from water always dilute pitchers of iced tea as they melt. Use frozen tea cubes instead. Or try them in lemonade and juices for a new layer of flavor.
6. **Tomato paste** Pop leftovers in the freezer so you'll always have that ounce or two you need for a savory sauce.
7. **Pesto** Speed up prep time of pasta, crostini and other delights. Simply thaw the cubes in the refrigerator first.
8. **Pureed butternut squash** Stir it into soups, stews and sauces simmering on the stove to enhance nutrition, flavor and texture.
9. **Chopped herbs** Savor their fresh flavors all year long. Freeze herbs in water (to make them easy to remove), then thaw and drain before using.
10. **Chicken broth** Avoid last-minute dashes to the store by keeping this kitchen essential on hand in the freezer.
11. **Berries** Add a few to smoothies, or thaw and sprinkle on yogurt for a quick, healthful breakfast.
12. **Coffee** Brew up a full-flavored iced coffee drink, or add a kick to desserts, gravy and more.
13. **Wine** Punch up a meal by putting a cube or two in any number of sauces.
14. **Tomato juice** Keep these on hand for chili, stew and so much more—including Bloody Marys. ■

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freezer 411

Imagine a freezer where bags of icy veggies are easy to find and rock-hard pot roasts aren't jarred loose to land on your toes. All of this can be yours with the help of these **chilly tips** from our test kitchen

Location, Location

- **Keep 'em cold.** Store meats and berries near the bottom or back of the freezer, where it's coldest. Plus, if there's a power outage and food begins to thaw, the drippy stuff won't leak onto other food.
- **Door duty.** Because it's repeatedly opened, the door is warmer than other areas and best suited for nuts, flour, juice and dairy products.
- **Go way back.** Put new, unfrozen items as far back as possible. The extra-low temperature there will help them freeze quickly, preventing ice crystals from forming on food.
- **First in, first out.** Use up older items before diving into the newer stash in back.

Proper Prepping

- **Cool it.** Chill freshly made food in the fridge before moving it to the freezer. Keep in mind that smaller portions will firm up faster. If you want to cool something quickly, place it in an ice bath while it's still in its container.
- **Wrapped right.** Store foods in a moisture- and vapor-resistant material, such as a tightly sealed plastic bag or containers, plastic wrap or aluminum foil.
- **Double up.** Double-wrap meats and casseroles to protect them from freezer burn. Two layers of heavy-duty aluminum foil are ideal.

Expiration Happens

Even though it's frozen, that doesn't mean it lasts forever. Use this list to evict foods as needed.

FOOD	# OF MONTHS
Cooked casseroles with meat	2-3
Cooked soups & stews	2-3
Raw bacon	1
Raw steak	6-12
Raw pork chops	4-6
Ground beef	4
Cooked, plain chicken breasts	4
Raw chicken pieces	9
Whole chicken or turkey	12
Cooked fish	4-6
Cooked shrimp	3
Ice cream	2
Cheese, hard or soft	6
Butter	6-9
Frozen veggies	8
Baked pie	1-2
Cheesecake	2-3
Baked quick bread	2-3
Yeast bread or rolls	3-6
Baked cookies	8-12

Rules of Thawing

- For food safety reasons, make sure you always thaw foods in the refrigerator or microwave, not on the kitchen counter.
- Once something is thawed, it should not be refrozen.

Stay Organized

- **Break it down.** Divide the freezer into zones. Designate areas for vegetables, bread, meats, etc., so you always know where to look for them.
- **Make your mark.** Label bags and containers with masking tape and a permanent marker. Include the date the food went in so you know if it's getting old. Use different-colored markers for different types of food—poultry, seafood, sauces—so you can find what you want at a glance.
- **Buddy up.** Combine like items. If you have four packages of frozen mixed berries, put them all into one larger plastic bag or an inexpensive plastic basket, then label the bag or basket.
- **Size it right.** Go ahead and buy in bulk, but take a minute to portion items into single or family-size servings first. That way, you'll only have to thaw the amount you need.

How Cold is Cold Enough?
Make sure you have a freezer thermometer to track the temperature in your freezer. It should always be 0° F—or less.

Take a Peek!
Check out our frozen assets recipe contest, page 57

ALPHABET MAGNETS: JIN BOYES/GETTY IMAGES; OTHER MAGNETS: SIMON BATTENSBY/GETTY IMAGES

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Crisp and Nutty Mix
This crunchy number can easily be changed up by swapping in seeds and nuts of your choice.
Curried Cashews
For more kick, stir in an additional ¼ teaspoon of cayenne pepper.
Nuts and Seeds Trail Mix
A handful of this protein-filled snack is a surefire energy booster.

Power Snacks

Munch on **protein-packed trail mixes** to keep you on **the fast track**

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FAST & FAB

It's easy to take up a cause and work up a sweat with fundraising walks and runs scattered around the country throughout the year. Keep energized as you gear up for these events—including October's **Breast Cancer Awareness Month**—with these nutty numbers. Nuts are rich in protein, fiber, unsaturated fats, phytonutrients and antioxidants. They may lower the risk of heart disease. Tuck a snack-size bag in your tote, backpack or purse for an on-the-go energy boost.

Crisp and Nutty Mix

On those busy days when you're running on the track or running to class, this mixture of dried fruit, cereal, nuts and more is the ultimate combination for munching.

—MIKE TCHOU PEPPER PIKE, OHIO

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 20 MIN. • **YIELD:** 2 QT.

- **1 cup Wheat Chex**
- **1 cup Multi-Grain Cheerios**
- **1 cup reduced-fat Triscuits, broken**
- **1 cup yogurt-covered pretzels**
- **½ cup blanched almonds**
- **½ cup dried apples, chopped**
- **½ cup dried banana chips**
- **½ cup dried blueberries**
- **½ cup salted cashews**
- **½ cup dark chocolate M&M's**
- **⅓ cup finely shredded unsweetened coconut**
- **⅓ cup sunflower kernels**
- **⅓ cup salted pumpkin seeds or pepitas**

1. In a large bowl, combine all of the ingredients. Store in an airtight container.

Nutrition Facts: *½ cup equals 250 calories, 14 g fat (6 g saturated fat), 1 mg cholesterol, 157 mg sodium, 28 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber, 6 g protein.*

Tip: *Find unsweetened coconut in the baking or health food sections of most grocery stores.*

Nuts and Seeds Trail Mix

Although there's plenty of protein and fiber in a handful of this combo, the fat and calorie count can soon get out of hand. Keep portion control in mind as you nibble away.

—KRISTIN RIMKUS
SNOHOMISH, WASHINGTON

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 15 MIN. • **YIELD:** 5 CUPS

- **1 cup salted pumpkin seeds or pepitas**
- **1 cup unblanched almonds**
- **1 cup unsalted sunflower kernels**
- **1 cup shelled walnuts**
- **1 cup chopped dried apricots**
- **1 cup dark chocolate chips**

1. In a large bowl, combine all ingredients. Store in an airtight container or spoon into individual serving size sealable bags.

Nutrition Facts: *⅓ cup equals 336 calories, 25 g fat (6 g saturated fat), 0 cholesterol, 96 mg sodium, 22 g carbohydrate, 4 g fiber, 11 g protein.*

Curried Cashews

Spiced cashews contrast with sweet dried cranberries in this quick combo made on the stovetop. Feel free to swap walnuts, almonds and/or pecans for the cashews.

—LOUISE GILBERT
QUESNEL, BRITISH COLUMBIA

PREP: 20 MIN. + COOLING • **YIELD:** 2½ CUPS

- **2 cups salted cashews**
- **1 Tbsp. olive oil**
- **2 tsp. curry powder**
- **1 garlic clove, minced**
- **1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce**
- **¾ tsp. ground cumin**
- **¼ tsp. cayenne pepper**
- **½ cup dried cranberries**

1. In a large nonstick skillet, cook cashews over medium heat until toasted, about 4 minutes. Add the oil, curry powder, garlic, Worcestershire sauce, cumin and cayenne. Cook and stir for 2-4 minutes or until cashews are well coated. Spread on foil to cool completely. Stir in cranberries; store in an airtight container.

Nutrition Facts: *⅓ cup equals 322 calories, 25 g fat (5 g saturated fat), 0 cholesterol, 298 mg sodium, 19 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 8 g protein.*

Leah's Party Popcorn

Popcorn gets special treatment when tossed with sesame breadsticks, mixed nuts, sunflower kernels and potato sticks. Pile it in bowls for parties or spoon individual portions into sealed bags or containers for anytime snacks.

—LEAH STEENBERG
CIRCLE PINES, MINNESOTA

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 30 MIN. • **YIELD:** 4 QT.

- **4 qt. popped popcorn**
- **2 cups miniature sesame breadsticks or sesame sticks**
- **2 cups mixed nuts**
- **1 cup sunflower kernels**
- **1 cup salted pumpkin seeds or pepitas**
- **1 cup potato sticks, optional**
- **¼ cup olive oil**
- **2 Tbsp. lemon juice**
- **1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce**
- **1 tsp. salt**
- **1 tsp. dill weed**
- **1 tsp. coarsely ground pepper**
- **½ tsp. onion powder**
- **½ tsp. garlic powder**
- **½ tsp. hot pepper sauce**

1. In a large bowl, combine the first five ingredients. Stir in the potato sticks if desired. In a small bowl, combine the remaining ingredients. Drizzle over popcorn mixture and toss to coat.

2. Spread into two greased 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pans. Bake at 325° for 15 minutes, stirring every 5 minutes. Cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container.

Nutrition Facts: *½ cup (calculated without potato sticks) equals 184 calories, 14 g fat (2 g saturated fat), 0 cholesterol, 299 mg sodium, 11 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 6 g protein.* ■

MORE ONLINE:
For more walking tips, visit
tasteofhome.com/walking

Pink Power

Several companies show their support for Breast Cancer Awareness Month by donating a portion of sales to fundraising efforts. Here are a few products that net contributions.

Drink Pink
Odwalla's **Pink Poetry Superfood** drink includes plum, cherry and guava juices, plus cranberry and green tea extracts. The drink contains vitamins C and E, iron and calcium. To celebrate the drink, Odwalla is donating $25,000 to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation.

Time Tracker
These small, **water-resistant watches** provide a flash of fun while working out or just gallivanting around town. Forty percent of sales in October go to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation. In other months, 20 percent of sales go to the foundation. **rumbatime.com,** *$35*

Clean Up
Philosophy donates 100 percent of its net profits from **Shower for the Cure pink ribbon shampoo, bath and shower gel** to the Women's Cancer Research Fund. The creamy formula contains comforting milky notes and a subtly delicate tangerine scent. **philosophy.com,** *$20*

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NEW

Reynolds Wrap
ALUMINUM FOIL
TRUSTED SINCE 1947

30 SQ. FT. (24 ft. X 15 IN.) 2.8m² (7.3m X 38.1 cm)

non-stick
PAN LINING PAPER
TEAR RESISTANT & NO CLEANUP!

ONE SIDE PARCHMENT

SIMPLE TO SCOOP EASY TO CLEAN

The parchment side is tear resistant and non-stick, so food easily lifts off.

The foil side allows the paper to form to the pan while making cleanup a snap.

LASAGNA

Prep Time: 20 mins • Cook Time: 40 mins • Makes: 8 servings

INGREDIENTS

- Reynolds Wrap® Pan Lining Paper
- 1 lb. ground beef, browned and drained
- 4 cups (about a 32 oz jar) pasta sauce
- 1 tablespoon dried Italian seasoning, divided
- 1 package (8 oz) lasagna noodles, cooked and drained
- 1 container (15 oz) ricotta cheese
- 1 egg
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese, divided
- 1 package (8 oz) shredded mozzarella cheese, divided

PREPARATION

PREHEAT oven to 375°F. Line a 13x9x2-inch baking pan with Reynolds Wrap® Pan Lining Paper with parchment side toward food. Crimp Pan Lining Paper around rim of pan; set aside. **COMBINE** ground beef, pasta sauce and 2 teaspoons Italian seasoning in a bowl; set aside. **COMBINE** ricotta cheese, egg, 2 tablespoons Parmesan cheese and remaining Italian seasoning in another bowl; set aside. **PLACE** 1 cup of sauce mixture evenly in the bottom of lined pan. **ARRANGE** noodles in a single layer on top of sauce in lined pan. Spread noodles with 1/3 of ricotta cheese mixture, 1/3 of mozzarella cheese and 1/3 of remaining sauce mixture. Repeat 2 more times to make 3 total layers. Sprinkle with remaining Parmesan cheese. **BAKE** 40 to 45 minutes or until sauce is bubbly and cheese is golden brown. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

For more information, visit **reynoldskitchens.com**

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Health Briefs

News to **peruse** for a better life | BY SARA ALTSHUL

20%
The amount your risk of developing type 2 diabetes increases if you watch TV 2 hours per day

TRIM CARBS, CUT CANCER RISK

A simple switch to a low-carb, high-protein diet can reduce a woman's risk of getting breast cancer, says Gerald Krystal, a scientist at the British Columbia Cancer Research Center in Vancouver. That means cutting back on white rice, white potatoes, white bread, sugary soda and fruit drinks.

Krystal's research team put breast cancer-prone mice on one of two diets. One was the typical American diet, made up of 55 percent carbohydrates, 23 percent protein and 22 percent fat. The other was divided into 15 percent carbs, 58 percent protein and 26 percent fat. Almost half the mice on the American diet developed breast cancer within their first year, while none on the low-carb diet did.

Of Mice and Men Although the research was done on mice, the results can be applied to humans. It's all about blood sugar, says Krystal. Tumor cells, unlike normal cells, need plenty of glucose to grow and multiply. Restricting carb intake—particularly simple carbs—limits blood glucose and insulin, a hormone that seems to promote tumor growth in people and mice.

"Eating whole grains and foods low on the glycemic index helps reduce blood glucose levels and insulin spikes that promote the incidence and growth rate of cancers," he says. And here's a secret: "Add a few teaspoons of lemon juice or vinegar to high-carb foods to lower their blood sugar-raising impact by up to one-third," says Krystal. When making pasta, for example, add lemon or vinegar to perk up the taste and trim the meal's impact on blood sugar.

Check out the searchable glycemic index databank run by Australia's University of Sydney at **glycemicindex.com**.

EAT DESSERT, LOSE WEIGHT

If your daughter is struggling to lose excess pounds, make sure a sugar-free, low-fat dessert is on her menu several times a week. Turns out girls on restrictive diets often get off track by splurging on fattening desserts. But when their eating plan includes sugar-free, low-fat desserts four times a week, weight-loss efforts are more successful, according to a study by researchers from the Athens University School of Medicine in Greece. Think sugar-free pudding made with skim milk, or sugar-free ice pops.

Picture Your Plate

Now you don't have to climb a pyramid to understand the basics of a healthy daily diet. Thanks to the USDA's new **choosemyplate.gov** initiative, it couldn't be simpler to eat well. Just fill a quarter of your plate with fruits, a quarter with veggies, a quarter with grains and a quarter with protein. Add a serving of low-fat dairy and—eureka! You've achieved the ideal healthy meal.

In addition to being mindful of the food on your plate, these key dietary guidelines released by the USDA will keep you and your family on track.

- Enjoy your food, but eat less.
- Avoid oversize portions.
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks.
- Make at least half your grains whole grains.
- Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk.
- Compare sodium in foods like soup, bread and frozen meals—and choose the lowest numbers. ■

BASKET: RTIMAGES; POPSICLES: MARGARET M. STEWART; MYPLATE.COM ICON: COURTESY OF USDA

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How We Roll

ready in 30 minutes

Take your breakfast in hand with these quick starters that begin with a tube of crescent roll dough. These baked breakfast bites tempt even the groggiest of kids—and parents—to **roll out of bed in the morning**

Nutty Cranberry Sticky Buns

Unroll 8 oz. tube **crescent dough**; seal perforations. Sprinkle with ½ cup **dried cranberries** and 2 Tbsp. **brown sugar**. Roll up, starting with a short side; pinch seam. Cut into 9 slices. Combine 2 Tbsp. each melted **butter**, **brown sugar** and **maple syrup**; spread onto the bottom of a greased 8-in. square baking dish. Sprinkle with ⅔ cup **pecans**; top with rolls. Bake at 375° for 18-22 minutes or until golden brown. Immediately invert onto a serving platter. *Makes 9.*

—**MARY SHIVERS** ADA, OKLAHOMA

Almond-Chocolate Crescents

Unroll an 8 oz. tube **crescent dough**; separate into triangles. Melt ¾ cup **semisweet chocolate chips** and 1 Tbsp. **shortening**. Spread 1 Tbsp. melted chocolate mixture over each triangle. Divide ¼ cup **almond paste** into 8 small logs; place on wide end of each triangle. Roll up; place on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake at 375° for 11-13 minutes or until golden brown. Cool. Drizzle with remaining chocolate mixture. *Makes 8.*

—**ROXANNE O'BRIEN** LYNDHURST, VIRGINIA

Sausage Breakfast Pockets

Unroll an 8 oz. tube **crescent dough** and separate into 4 rectangles. Combine ¼ lb. cooked **pork sausage**, ½ cup shredded **cheddar cheese**, 2 oz. **cream cheese** and 1 Tbsp. **dried parsley flakes**; divide among rectangles. Bring 4 corners of dough to the center; twist and press to seal. Place on greased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 14-16 minutes or until golden brown. *Makes 4.*

—**CHERI HARRISON** CAIRO, GEORGIA

Raspberry Cheese Danish

Unroll an 8 oz. tube **crescent dough** and separate into 4 rectangles. Seal perforations; cut each in half, making 8 squares. Beat 4 oz. **cream cheese** with ¼ cup **confectioners' sugar**; spread 1 Tbsp. diagonally across each square. Top with 1 Tbsp. **raspberry jam**. Pinch 2 opposite corners of dough over filling to seal. Bake on parchment paper-lined baking sheets at 375° for 10-12 minutes or until golden brown. Combine ½ cup **confectioners' sugar** with 2 tsp. **milk**; drizzle over danishes. *Makes 8.*

—**KAREN WEIR** LITCHFIELD, CONNECTICUT

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Honey Moon Rolls

Unroll 8 oz. tube **crescent dough**; separate into triangles. Beat 4 oz. softened **cream cheese**, 2 Tbsp. **honey** and ¼ cup **sliced almonds**; place 1 Tbsp. in the center of each triangle. Roll up; place on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake at 375° for 12-14 minutes or until golden brown. Drizzle with additional **honey**. *Makes 8.*

—ABBY RUTILA WHITE LAKE, MICHIGAN

Pumpkin Butter Pinwheels

Unroll an 8 oz. tube **crescent dough**; seal perforations. Spread with ½ cup **pumpkin butter** and sprinkle with **chopped pecans**, if desired. Roll up, starting with the short side; pinch seam. Place on a greased baking sheet; cut into 8 slices to within ½ in. of bottom. Pull slices to each side, alternating left and right. Bake at 375° for 12-15 minutes or until golden brown. Spread with prepared **vanilla frosting**. Top with additional pecans if desired. *Makes 4.*

—LORI MERRICK DANVERS, ILLINOIS

Brittany's Breakfast Bites

Unroll an 8 oz. tube **crescent dough**; separate into triangles. Cook 2 beaten **eggs** in a buttered skillet until set; remove from heat. Stir in 3 Tbsp. each cooked crumbled **bacon**, chopped **deli ham** and shredded **cheddar cheese**; spoon onto triangles. Roll up; place on a greased baking sheet. Bake at 375° for 11-13 minutes or until golden. *Makes 8.* ■

—BRITTANY WHITWORTH COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO

Grab and Go

Eating and drinking while traveling is an art form that takes perfecting. These clever products prevent spills and splashes while showing off a fashionable look.

1 Disappearing Act
This **water "bottle"** can be folded or rolled up to tuck away when empty. Fill it up and it stands tall. BPA-free, washable, freezable, super portable and available in a rainbow of colors.
vapur.us, *$10*

2 Straighten Up
Handy for kids and klutzy adults, this **bowl** is designed to keep from tipping over and spilling its contents.
buygyrobowl.com, *$15*

3 On Ice
Snacks and drinks stay super-cool with these **freezable compact lunch bags**. Food stays chilly up to 10 hours.
packitcool.com, *$20*

4 Perfect Square
MilkMates has designed a **plastic drink holder adapter** that makes it easy to tuck juice boxes and square milk cartons into cup holders in any car or stroller.
kidcentral.ca, *$4*

5 Drinking Duo
Can't decide between orange and apple juice? Now you don't have to, thanks to the **Hydra Duo drink bottle** that holds two drinks in one.
quirky.com, *$18*

MORE ONLINE:
For more quick recipes ready in 30 minutes or less, visit **tasteofhome.com/30**

GRAB AND GO PRODUCED BY **SASHA LEYKIN**

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New USDA Study Shows:

Eggs Have Less Cholesterol, More Vitamin D

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently announced that cholesterol levels in eggs are lower than previously thought. After reviewing the nutrient composition of standard large eggs, the USDA results show the average amount of cholesterol in one large egg is 185 mg, 14% lower than previously recorded. Consuming an egg a day fits easily within dietary guidance, which recommends limiting cholesterol consumption to 300 mg per day.

The USDA analysis also revealed that a single large egg now contains 64% more Vitamin D than last reported in 2002. Eggs are one of the few foods that are a naturally good source of Vitamin D, which plays an important role in calcium absorption, helping to form and maintain strong bones.

The amount of protein in one large egg remains the same – 6 grams of protein or 13% of the recommended daily value. And at 70 calories per egg and just 15 cents a serving, eggs are nutrient-dense, affordable and the perfect choice for breakfast.

For more information on the nutritional benefits of eggs, or to pick up new and exciting recipes, check out www.facebook.com/IncredibleEdibleEgg

LOOK FOR THE **NEW NUTRITION FACTS** PANEL ON EGG CARTONS

14% LESS

GOOD SOURCE

GOOD SOURCE

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 egg (50g)
Serving per Container 12

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 70	Calories from Fat 45
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 5g	**8%**
Saturated Fat 1.5g	**8%**
Polyunsaturated Fat 1g	
Monounsaturated Fat 2g	
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 185mg	**60%**
Sodium 70mg	**3%**
Potassium 70mg	**2%**
Total Carbohydrate 0g	**0%**
Protein 6g	**13%**

Vitamin A 6% • Vitamin C 0%
Vitamin D 10% • Calcium 2%
Iron 4% • Thiamin 0%
Riboflavin 10% • Vitamin B-6 4%
Folate 6% • Vitamin B-12 8%
Phosphorus 10% • Zinc 4%

Not a significant source of Dietary fiber or Sugars

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2000 Calorie diet. Your daily volumes may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Potassium		3,500mg	3,500mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g
Protein		50g	65g

Calories per gram
Fat 9 - Carbohydrate 4 - Protein 4

MICROWAVE COFFEE CUP SCRAMBLE

Prep Time: 1 minute
Cook Time: 45 to 60 seconds
Makes: 1 serving

WHAT YOU NEED

- **2** EGGS
- **2** Tbsp. milk
- **2** Tbsp. shredded Cheddar Cheese
- Salt and pepper

HERE'S HOW

1. COAT 12-oz. microwave-safe coffee mug with cooking spray. ADD eggs and milk; beat until blended.
2. MICROWAVE on HIGH 45 seconds; stir. MICROWAVE until eggs are almost set, 30 to 45 seconds longer.
3. TOP with cheese; season with salt and pepper

Microwave ovens vary. Cooking times may need to be adjusted.

In 2010, a random sample of regular large shell eggs was collected from locations across the country to analyze the nutrient content of eggs. The testing procedure was last completed with eggs in 2002, and while most nutrients remained similar to those values, cholesterol decreased by 14% and vitamin D increased by 64% from 2002 values. Average amount of cholesterol in one egg is 185 mg, down from 215 mg.

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High-Speed Suppers

On time-crunched evenings, there's no need to race around the kitchen when **this comfort food is so quick to fix**

Autumn Beans ▸

Fast and Fabulous
This saucy and sloppy joe uses ground turkey for a change of pace.

$3.50/serving

MONDAY ON A BUN

Buffalo Sloppy Joes

Lean ground turkey makes this a lighter sloppy joe than the standard ground beef version. A hefty splash of hot sauce and optional blue cheese provide an authentic Buffalo-style flavor.

—MARIA REGAKIS
SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS FE

TOTAL TIME: 30 MIN. • **YIELD:** 8 SERVINGS

- **2 lbs. extra-lean ground turkey**
- **2 celery ribs, chopped**
- **1 medium onion, chopped**
- **1 medium carrot, grated**
- **3 garlic cloves, minced**
- **1 can (8 oz.) tomato sauce**
- **½ cup reduced-sodium chicken broth**
- **¼ cup Louisiana-style hot sauce**
- **2 Tbsp. brown sugar**
- **2 Tbsp. red wine vinegar**
- **1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce**
- **¼ tsp. pepper**
- **8 hamburger buns, split**
- **1 cup (4 oz.) crumbled blue cheese, optional**

1. In a Dutch oven, cook the first five ingredients over medium heat until turkey is no longer pink. Stir in the tomato sauce, chicken broth, hot sauce, brown sugar, vinegar, Worcestershire sauce and pepper; heat through.
2. Serve on buns; sprinkle with blue cheese if desired.

ON THE SIDE
Autumn Beans

Cook 1 lb. chopped **bacon** strips until crisp. Drain, reserving ¼ cup drippings. Saute ½ cup chopped **onion** in drippings until tender. Stir in 2 cups **apple cider**, 4 cans (16 oz. each) undrained **baked beans**, ½ cup **raisins** and 1 tsp. **ground cinnamon**. Simmer for 20-25 minutes or until slightly thickened. ***Serves 8.***

Tip: *Keep a stash of chopped onions in the freezer to shorten the prep time.*

—MARA MCAULEY HINSDALE, NEW YORK

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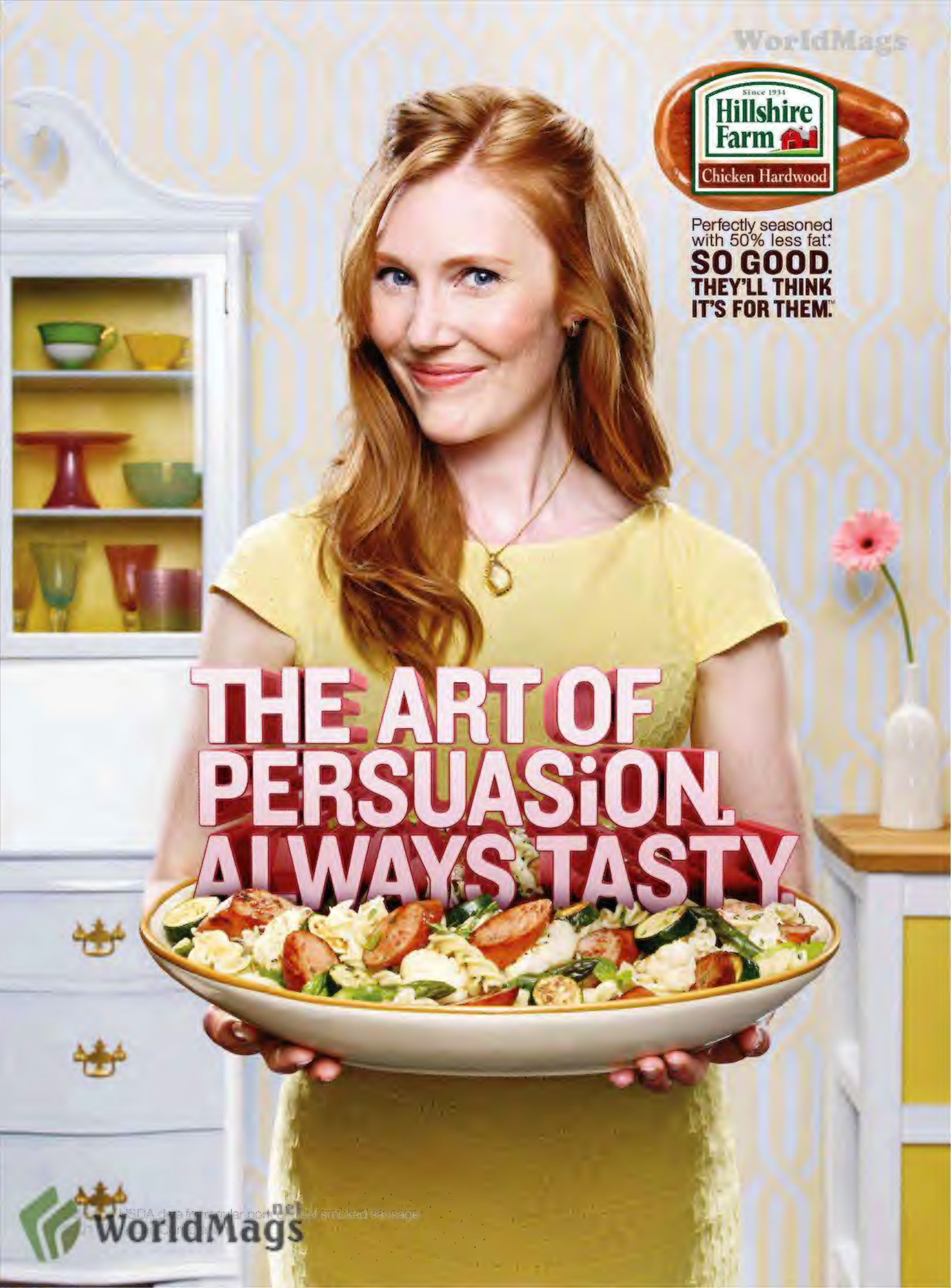
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*USDA data for regular pork and beef smoked sausage.

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▼ **Refried Bean-Taco Pizza, Speedy Salsa**

▲ **Grape Melon Medley, Twice-Baked Breakfast Potatoes**

TEMPTING TUESDAY

Refried Bean-Taco Pizza

When I'm in a rush, I take advantage of convenient prepared pizza crust to create this Mexican-style pizza. If you like it spicy, add a little chopped jalapeno pepper to the skillet when cooking the beef.

—MARY DETWEILER MIDDLEFIELD, OHIO

PREP: 30 MIN. • **BAKE:** 20 MIN.
YIELD: 8 SERVINGS

- **1¼ lbs. ground beef**
- **1 small onion, chopped**
- **½ cup water**
- **1 envelope taco seasoning**
- **1 prebaked 12-in. pizza crust**
- **1 can (16 oz.) refried beans**
- **2 taco shells, coarsely crushed**
- **1 cup (4 oz.) shredded cheddar cheese**
- **1 cup (4 oz.) shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese**
- **2 cups torn iceberg lettuce**
- **2 medium tomatoes, chopped**
- **1 Tbsp. sliced ripe olives**

1. In a large skillet, cook beef and onion over medium heat until no longer pink; drain. Stir in water and taco seasoning. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, place crust on an ungreased baking sheet. Spread with refried beans. Top with the beef mixture, taco shells and cheeses. Bake at 450° for 10-15 minutes or until cheese is melted. Top with lettuce, tomatoes and olives.

ON THE SIDE
Speedy Salsa

Combine 2 cans (14½ oz.) drained **diced tomatoes**, 1 chopped medium **onion**, ¼ cup minced fresh **cilantro**, 1 seeded and minced **jalapeno pepper**, 1 Tbsp. **sugar** and ½ tsp. **salt**. Serve with **tortilla chips**. *Makes 3½ cups.*

Tip: *Toss some chopped avocado in the salsa for an added wow.*

—DANA SAPP SCOTTSVILLE, KENTUCKY

Editor's Note: *We recommend wearing disposable gloves when cutting hot peppers. Avoid touching your face.*

WILD ABOUT WEDNESDAY

Twice-Baked Breakfast Potatoes

Leftover baked potatoes were the inspiration for this impromptu meal.

—WILLIAM BROCK AMELIA, OHIO

PREP: 30 MIN. • **BAKE:** 15 MIN.
YIELD: 8 SERVINGS

- **4 large baking potatoes**
- **1 Tbsp. butter**
- **4 eggs, beaten**
- **10 oz. bulk sausage**
- **¼ cup sour cream**
- **8 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled**
- **¾ cup shredded cheddar cheese, divided**
- **½ cup minced chives, divided**
- **1 Tbsp. minced fresh parsley**
- **½ tsp. salt**
- **½ tsp. pepper**
- **Additional sour cream, optional**

1. Scrub and pierce potatoes; place on a microwave-safe plate. Microwave, uncovered, on high for 15-17 minutes or until tender, turning once.
2. Meanwhile, in a large skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add eggs; cook and stir until set. Remove and set aside. In the same skillet, cook sausage over medium heat until no longer pink; drain and set aside.
3. When potatoes are cool enough to handle, cut each in half lengthwise. Scoop out pulp, leaving thin shells. In a large bowl, mash the pulp with sour cream. Stir in bacon, ½ cup cheese, ¼ cup chives, parsley, salt, pepper, eggs and sausage. Spoon into potato shells.
4. Place on a baking sheet. Bake, uncovered, at 375° for 12-15 minutes or until heated through. Sprinkle with remaining cheese and chives. Serve with additional sour cream if desired.

ON THE SIDE
Grape Melon Medley

Combine 2 cups cubed **cantaloupe**, 1½ cups each halved green and red **grapes** and 1 can (11 oz.) drained **mandarin oranges**. Fold in ½ cup **pineapple preserves**. *Serves 8.*

—DORIS RUSSELL FALLSTON, MARYLAND

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TIME-SAVING THURSDAY

Chicken Creole

I always use jasmine rice here, but any cooked rice, including brown, works.
—**VIRGINIA CROWELL** LYONS, OREGON

PREP: 20 MIN. • **COOK:** 30 MIN.
YIELD: 8 SERVINGS

- **2 medium green peppers, chopped**
- **1 large onion, thinly sliced**
- **2 celery ribs, chopped**
- **4 garlic cloves, minced**
- **4 tsp. canola oil, divided**
- **½ lb. fresh mushrooms, sliced**
- **2 cans (14½ oz. each) diced tomatoes, undrained**
- **½ cup chicken broth**
- **2 Tbsp. minced fresh oregano or 2 tsp. dried oregano**
- **2 Tbsp. lemon juice**
- **1 Tbsp. minced fresh basil or 1 tsp. dried basil**
- **½ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes**
- **2 lbs. boneless skinless chicken breasts, cubed**
- **Hot cooked rice**
- **Minced fresh parsley, optional**

1. In a saucepan, saute green peppers, onion, celery and garlic in 2 tsp. oil until tender. Add mushrooms; cook until liquid has evaporated. Stir in tomatoes, chicken broth, oregano, lemon juice, basil and red pepper flakes. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 5-10 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, in a Dutch oven, saute chicken in remaining oil in batches until no longer pink. Return chicken to pan; stir in sauce. Heat through, stirring to loosen browned bits from pan. Serve over rice; top with parsley if desired.

ON THE SIDE
Chili Corn Bread Wedges

Whisk 1 **egg**, ⅓ cup 2% **milk**, 4 oz. canned chopped **green chilies** and 2 Tbsp. **sugar**. Stir into 8½ oz. **corn bread/muffin mix**. Fold in ¾ cup thawed frozen **corn**. Pour into a greased 9-in. round baking pan. Bake at 400° for 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near center comes out clean. Cut into wedges; serve warm. *Serves 8.*
—***TASTE OF HOME* TEST KITCHEN**

SUPER-FAST FRIDAY

Crispy Baked Chicken

Combine mashed potato flakes with Parmesan cheese for an ultra-crunchy coating to oven-baked chicken that is oh-so-tender and perfectly moist.
—**JUNE BROWN** VENETA, OREGON

PREP: 15 MIN. • **BAKE:** 50 MIN.
YIELD: 4 SERVINGS

- **2 cups mashed potato flakes**
- **2 Tbsp. grated Parmesan cheese**
- **2 to 3 tsp. poultry seasoning**
- **½ to 1 tsp. pepper**
- **½ cup butter, melted**
- **1 broiler/fryer chicken (3½ to 4½ lbs.), cut up**

1. In a shallow dish, combine the potato flakes, Parmesan cheese, poultry seasoning and pepper. Place butter in another shallow dish. Dip chicken in butter, then coat with potato flake mixture.
2. Place on a lightly greased 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan. Bake, uncovered, at 375° for 50-65 minutes or until juices run clear.

ON THE SIDE
Creamy Chive Mashed Potatoes

Cook 5 peeled and cubed medium **potatoes** in salted water for 15-20 minutes or until tender; drain. Mash with 4 oz. **cream cheese**, 2 Tbsp. **butter**, 2 Tbsp. minced **chives**, ½ tsp. **salt**, ¼ tsp. **pepper** and ¼-½ cup **buttermilk** until smooth. *Serves 4.*
Tip: *Soften cream cheese quickly by heating it on a microwave-safe plate on high for 15 seconds or until softened.* ■
—**BONNIE THOMPSON** RATHDRUM, IDAHO

▼ **Chili Corn Bread Wedges, Chicken Creole**

▲ **Crispy Baked Chicken, Creamy Chive Mashed Potatoes**

Easy Meals for Busy Families
Make weeknight dinners hassle-free with *Simple & Delicious,* our sister magazine! Each issue includes a mix of last-minute menus, plan-ahead ideas and goof-proof tips. For a free trial issue, visit **tasteofhome.com/freesimple**

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*Ryan, AS et al. *Prostaglandins Leukot Essent Fatty Acids.* 2010 Apr-Jun;82(4-6):385-14.

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Crunch Time

Time-strapped cooks can put a **new spin on fast food** with a homemade treat | BY KRISTI LARSON, *CULINARY SPECIALIST*

We know everyone's pressed for time, because requests for **quick and easy recipes are tops** among those who attend our cooking schools. I often suggest these five-ingredient cereal bars **because little ones can help pat them in the pan. The treats are** just right for on-the-go snacking, serving at kids' parties or nibbling on during homework time.

Kristi presents *Taste of Home* cooking school shows in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, California, Utah and Nevada.

Peanut Butter Cereal Treats

A coating of cooking spray keeps fingers clean when pressing this into the pan.
—**CHRISTIE PORTER**
SHIPSHEWANA, INDIANA

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 30 MIN.
YIELD: 2 DOZEN

- **30 large marshmallows**
- **3 Tbsp. butter**
- **1 Tbsp. peanut butter**
- **6 cups Peanut Butter Cap'n Crunch**
- **1½ cups milk chocolate M&M's**

1. In a large saucepan, combine the marshmallows, butter and peanut butter. Cook and stir over medium-low heat until melted. Remove from the heat. Stir in the cereal and M&M's.
2. Pat into a 13 x 9-in. pan coated with cooking spray. Cool. Cut into bars. ■

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contest

Frozen Assets

Reaching into the freezer and discovering a ready-made meal stashed away is like finding a **gift straight from the North Pole**—in October. Under that hazy shroud of frost lies a busy cook's best friend and a **hungry family's favorite dish**

Well Contained Use storage containers that are marked freezer safe.
Single Serving Divvy up food into smaller portions for quicker thawing.
Bag It Remove excess air from plastic bags and stack them to save space.
win!
Pan Free Line casserole dishes with foil, leaving a foil overhang. Use foil to lift food from the pan after freezing. Place in a resealable plastic bag and store in freezer.

YOU COULD BE NEXT! TURN THE PAGE TO ENTER OUR NEXT RECIPE CONTEST

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AMERICA'S BEST HOME COOK 2012
CONTEST *& WIN!*

$1,000

ARE YOU AMERICA'S BEST HOME COOK?
If cooking is your passion, now's the time to show off your favorite dish. We're looking for **America's Best Home Cook 2012**. That cook could be you.

Send us your signature dish or favorite family recipe that has earned you championship status among friends and family. You could walk away with the top prize—**$1,000**—and the chance to be featured in *Taste of Home*.

WE'RE LOOKING FOR RECIPES THAT WOW IN THESE CATEGORIES:

- **Appetizers & Snacks** Let your imagination run wild with savory finger foods that keep the crowd happy. Think bite-size shrimp cocktail pizza; skewers with va-va-va-voom; pop-in-your-mouth tartlets and tapas with global flair.
- **Main Dishes** The sky's the limit when it comes to preparation and ingredients—that goes for the occasion, too. Get creative with entrees for formal affairs, casual gatherings, romantic date nights or weeknight dinners.
- **Soups, Salads & Sides** Show off fresh flavors and updated classics, such as chowders with a kick, fully loaded salads or pastas that steal the show.
- **Desserts** Unleash your wildest fantasies, filled with chocolate, cream, fruit, caramel and everything divine. Show off your best grand finale special that everyone finds impossible to resist.

ENTRY DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 30, 2011.
Winners and runners-up will be announced in the **October 2012** issue.

ENTER TODAY AT
tasteofhome.com/recipecontests

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NANCY LATULIPPE
SIMCOE, ONTARIO
Nancy's savory make-ahead stew earned top honors and a fistful of cash.

Meet This Issue's *Grand Prize* Winner

Mushrooms—fresh and dried—add hearty flavor to this **winning comfort food favorite** from Nancy Latulippe of Simcoe, Ontario

TOH: **What's the secret to making your grand prize recipe?**
NANCY: I've been making my Mushroom Beef Stew for quite a while. At first, I followed my mom's recipe step-by-step. Over time, I began to play around with the recipe. You should, too; mix it up and don't be afraid to be adventurous.

TOH: **Who taught you to cook?**
NANCY: I was the only girl among five kids. My mom and I would hang out in the kitchen, where she was always cooking. She taught me most of her recipes. After a while, I began switching things up to make the recipes my own. Because my husband eats almost anything, I'm free to be creative and try new recipes out on him.

TOH: **What are your family's favorite foods?**
NANCY: I really love to make desserts. Everyone in my family loves my chocolate and peanut butter cheesecake. They also love this stew and the different types of mushrooms in it. It's especially good when it's cold outside, served with fresh, warm bread.

TOH: **Tell us a bit more about yourself and your family.**
NANCY: I was born and raised in Ohio, where I had lived for most of my life. About five years ago, I moved to Canada to get married. My husband, Yvon, is a retired transport truck driver and helps me run my event decorating business from our home. He has three grown sons who live nearby: Jason, Brandon and Morgan. I have six grown kids of my own back in Ohio: Pamela, Michael, Dawn, Sarah, Krystal and Heather.

TOH: **What are your plans for the prize money?**
NANCY: I'm not 100 percent sure, but my husband and I are always doing mini renovation projects around the house. We might use the money to do some traveling together. Either way, I'm overjoyed! ■

PHOTOGRAPH, LEFT: DEJAN PATIC/GETTY IMAGES

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GRAND PRIZE

Mushroom Beef Stew

NANCY LATULIPPE SIMCOE, ONTARIO

Top this hearty stew with crumbled blue cheese just before serving to add a burst of flavor. Serve some now and store the rest in the freezer for another meal.

1ST PLACE

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Cappuccino Brownies

SUSIE JONES BUHL, IDAHO

There's something magical in coffee that intensifies the flavor of chocolate. These three-layer wonders freeze well, but somehow most of them disappear before they reach the freezer.

2ND PLACE

Wonton Pot Stickers with Soy Reduction

MICHAEL ANGELO SPRING, TEXAS

Bok choy is a type of Chinese cabbage with white stems and dark green leaves. In a pinch, regular cabbage will do. These appetizers—full of sausage, cilantro, ginger, and onion—freeze so well, I always make large batches. Then I have extras to pull out of the freezer at a moment's notice.

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3RD PLACE

Lone Star Chicken Enchiladas

AVANELL HEWITT NORTH RICHLAND HILLS, TEXAS

Start with deli-roasted chicken and this family-friendly casserole will be ready in no time. For a milder version, use Monterey Jack cheese in place of pepper Jack.

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Cappuccino Brownies

PREP: 30 MIN. + CHILLING • **BAKE:** 25 MIN. + COOLING • **YIELD:** 2 DOZEN

- **8 oz. bittersweet chocolate, chopped**
- **¾ cup butter, cut up**
- **2 Tbsp. instant coffee granules**
- **1 Tbsp. hot water**
- **4 eggs**
- **1½ cups sugar**
- **2 tsp. vanilla extract**
- **1 cup all-purpose flour**
- **½ tsp. salt**
- **1 cup chopped walnuts**

TOPPING:

- **1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened**
- **6 Tbsp. butter, softened**
- **1½ cups confectioners' sugar**
- **1 tsp. ground cinnamon**
- **1 tsp. vanilla extract**

GLAZE:

- **4 tsp. instant coffee granules**
- **1 Tbsp. hot water**
- **5 oz. bittersweet chocolate, chopped**
- **2 Tbsp. butter**
- **½ cup heavy whipping cream**

1. In a microwave, melt chocolate and butter; stir until smooth. Cool slightly. Dissolve coffee granules in hot water. In a large bowl, beat eggs and sugar. Stir in vanilla, chocolate mixture and coffee mixture. Combine flour and salt; gradually add to chocolate mixture until blended. Fold in walnuts.

2. Transfer to a greased and floured 13-in. x 9-in. baking pan. Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool completely on a wire rack.

3. For topping, in a large bowl, beat cream cheese and butter until blended. Add confectioners' sugar, cinnamon and vanilla; beat on low speed until combined. Spread over bars. Refrigerate until firm, about 1 hour.

4. For glaze, dissolve coffee granules in hot water. In a microwave, melt chocolate and butter; cool slightly. Stir in cream and coffee mixture. Spread over cream cheese layer. Let stand until set. Cover and freeze for up to 3 months.

To use frozen brownies: Thaw at room temperature. Cut into bars. Refrigerate leftovers.

Mushroom Beef Stew

PREP: 45 MIN. • **COOK:** 1½ HOURS • **YIELD:** 9 SERVINGS

- **1 carton (32 oz.) beef broth**
- **1 oz. dried mixed mushrooms**
- **¼ cup all-purpose flour**
- **1 tsp. salt**
- **1 tsp. pepper**
- **1 boneless beef chuck roast (2 lbs.), cubed**
- **3 Tbsp. canola oil**
- **1 lb. whole baby portobello mushrooms**
- **5 medium carrots, chopped**
- **1 large onion, chopped**
- **3 garlic cloves, minced**
- **3 tsp. minced fresh rosemary or 1 tsp. dried rosemary, crushed**

ADDITIONAL INGREDIENTS:

- **2 Tbsp. cornstarch**
- **2 Tbsp. water**
- **Hot cooked egg noodles, optional**
- **¼ cup crumbled blue cheese**

1. In a saucepan, bring broth and mushrooms to a boil. Remove from heat; let stand 15-20 minutes or until soft. Use a slotted spoon to remove mushrooms; finely chop. Strain broth through a fine mesh strainer. Set aside mushrooms and broth.

2. In a large resealable plastic bag, combine the flour, salt and pepper; set aside 1 Tbsp. for sauce. Add beef, a few pieces at a time, to the remaining flour mixture and shake to coat.

3. In a Dutch oven, brown beef in oil in batches. Add portobello mushrooms, carrots and onion; saute until onion is tender. Add garlic, rosemary and rehydrated mushrooms; cook 1 minute. Stir in reserved flour mixture until blended; add mushroom broth.

4. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 1½ to 2 hours or until beef is tender. Cool; transfer to freezer containers. Freeze for up to 6 months.

To use frozen stew: Thaw stew in the refrigerator overnight. Place in a Dutch oven; bring to a boil. Combine cornstarch and water; gradually stir into pan. Return to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes. Serve with noodles if desired; top with cheese.

Lone Star Chicken Enchiladas

PREP: 30 MIN. + FREEZING • **BAKE:** 35 MIN. • **YIELD:** 6 SERVINGS

- **3 cups shredded cooked chicken breast**
- **1 can (10 oz.) diced tomatoes with mild green chilies, drained**
- **¾ cup salsa verde**
- **1 can (4 oz.) chopped green chilies**
- **1 can (21/4 oz.) sliced ripe olives, drained**
- **1 tsp. ground cumin**
- **2½ cups heavy whipping cream**
- **¾ tsp. salt**
- **12 corn tortillas (6 in.), warmed**
- **2 cups (8 oz.) shredded pepper Jack cheese**

1. In a large bowl, combine the first six ingredients. In a shallow bowl, combine cream and salt.

2. Dip both sides of each tortilla in cream mixture; top with ¼ cup chicken mixture. Roll up and place seam side down in a greased 13-in. x 9-in. baking dish. Pour remaining cream mixture over top; sprinkle with cheese. Cover and freeze for up to 6 months.

To use frozen casserole: Thaw in the refrigerator overnight. Remove from the refrigerator 30 minutes before baking. Cover and bake at 350° for 35-40 minutes or until heated through.

Wonton Pot Stickers with Soy Reduction

PREP: 45 MIN. + FREEZING • **COOK:** 15 MIN./BATCH
YIELD: ABOUT 3½ DOZEN (¾ CUP SAUCE)

- **½ cup mirin (sweet rice wine)**
- **½ cup balsamic vinegar**
- **¼ cup reduced-sodium soy sauce**
- **2 fresh basil leaves**

POT STICKERS:

- **1½ cups finely chopped bok choy**
- **2 Tbsp. minced fresh cilantro**
- **1 Tbsp. minced fresh gingerroot**
- **1 Tbsp. chopped green onion**
- **1 Tbsp. oyster sauce**
- **¾ tsp. toasted sesame oil**
- **1 lb. ground pork**
- **45 wonton wrappers**

ADDITIONAL INGREDIENTS:

- **¼ cup toasted sesame oil**

1. In a pan, combine mirin, vinegar and soy sauce. Bring to a boil; cook until liquid is reduced by half, about 15 minutes. Add basil; cover and steep for 2 minutes. Remove basil and discard. Cool sauce; transfer to freezer container.

2. For pot stickers, combine first six ingredients in a large bowl. Crumble pork over mixture and mix well.

3. Place 1 Tbsp. pork mixture in center of each wonton wrapper. (Cover remaining wrappers with a damp paper towel until ready to use.) Moisten edges with water. Fold one corner diagonally over filling and press edges to seal.

4. Place on waxed paper-lined 15- x 10- x 1-in. baking sheet; freeze until firm. Transfer to resealable plastic freezer bags. May be frozen for up to 3 months.

To use frozen pot stickers: Thaw sauce in refrigerator overnight. Arrange some of the pot stickers 1 in. apart in a greased steamer; place in a large saucepan over 1 in. of water. Bring to a boil; cover and steam for 12-14 minutes or until a meat thermometer inserted into filling reads 160°. Repeat with remaining pot stickers.

In a skillet, cook pot stickers in oil in batches over medium-high heat for 1-2 minutes on each side. Serve with sauce.

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Brown Bag Burritos

MINDY CULVER POST FALLS, IDAHO

This recipe made it through the pickiest taste testers: my kids! They absolutely hate beans, but love, love, love these plump burritos.

Crunchy Chocolate Mint Balls

AMANDA TRIFF DARTMOUTH, NOVA SCOTIA

Get a jump on the holidays by making these four-ingredient truffles and tucking them away in the freezer for gift giving. For an extra-special touch, I like to present them in mini cupcake holders.

Roasted Tomato Soup

KAITLYN LERDAHL MADISON, WISCONSIN

Just before the first frost of the season, we gather up all of the tomatoes from my mom's garden to create this flavor-packed soup. Although it sounds like a lot of garlic, when it's roasted, the garlic becomes mellow and almost sweet. We serve this soup with toasted bread spread with pesto.

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Homemade Pierogies

DIANE GAWRYS MANCHESTER, TENNESSEE

Pierogies are dumplings or tiny pies stuffed with a filling—often potatoes and cheese—and boiled, then cooked in butter. Our friends always ask us to bring these to potlucks.

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Crunchy Chocolate Mint Balls

PREP: 45 MIN. + CHILLING • **COOK:** 5 MIN. + FREEZING
YIELD: 4½ DOZEN

- **1 pkg. (10 oz.) mint chocolate chips**
- **¼ cup butter, softened**
- **1 can (14 oz.) sweetened condensed milk**
- **1¼ cups chocolate wafer crumbs (about 22 wafers)**
- **White jimmies**

1. In a double boiler or metal bowl over hot water, melt chips and butter; stir until smooth. Stir in milk. Add wafer crumbs; mix to coat. Refrigerate for 1 hour or until easy to handle.
2. Roll into 1-in. balls; roll in jimmies. Place on a waxed paper-lined 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan; freeze until firm. Transfer to a resealable plastic freezer bag. May be frozen for up to 3 months.
To use frozen balls: Thaw at room temperature.
Tip: If mint chocolate chips are not available, place 2 cups (12 oz.) semisweet chocolate chips and ¼ tsp. peppermint extract in a plastic bag; seal and toss to coat.

Brown Bag Burritos

PREP: 35 MIN. + FREEZING • **COOK:** 5 MIN./BATCH
YIELD: 16 SERVINGS

- **2 lbs. ground beef**
- **2 cans (16 oz. each) refried beans**
- **3 cups (12 oz.) shredded Mexican cheese blend or cheddar cheese**
- **1⅓ cups enchilada sauce**
- **½ cup water**
- **⅓ cup chopped onion**
- **2 Tbsp. chili powder**
- **1 Tbsp. garlic powder**
- **2 tsp. dried oregano**
- **1 tsp. salt**
- **16 flour tortillas (10 in.), warmed**
- **Optional toppings: shredded Mexican cheese blend, sour cream, shredded lettuce, chopped tomatoes and sliced ripe olives**

1. In a Dutch oven, cook beef over medium heat until no longer pink; drain. Return to pan; add the beans, cheese, enchilada sauce, water, onion and seasonings. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 10 minutes.
2. Spoon ½ cup filling off center on each tortilla. Fold sides and end over filling and roll up. Wrap individually in paper towels, then foil. Transfer wrapped burritos to a resealable plastic freezer bag. May be frozen for up to 2 months.
To use frozen burritos: Unwrap foil. Place paper towel-wrapped burritos on a microwave-safe plate. Microwave on high for 3-4 minutes or until heated through. Serve with toppings of choice.

Homemade Pierogies

PREP: 1 HOUR + FREEZING • **COOK:** 5 MIN./BATCH • **YIELD:** 6 DOZEN

- **5 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 tsp. salt**
- **1 cup water**
- **3 eggs**
- **½ cup butter, softened**

FILLING:

- **4 medium potatoes, peeled and cubed**
- **2 medium onions, chopped**
- **2 Tbsp. butter**
- **5 oz. cream cheese, softened**
- **½ tsp. salt**
- **½ tsp. pepper**

ADDITIONAL INGREDIENTS: (for each serving):

- **¼ cup chopped onion**
- **1 Tbsp. butter**
- **Minced fresh parsley**

1. In a food processor, combine flour and salt; cover and pulse to blend. Add water, eggs and butter; cover and pulse until dough forms a ball; add 1 to 2 Tbsp. more of water or flour if needed. Let rest, covered, for 15 to 30 minutes.
2. Place potatoes in a saucepan; cover with water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 10-15 minutes or until tender. Meanwhile, in a skillet, saute onions in butter until tender.
3. Drain potatoes. Over very low heat, stir potatoes for 1-2 minutes or until steam has evaporated. Press through a potato ricer or strainer into a large bowl. Stir in cream cheese, salt, pepper and onion mixture; set aside.
4. Divide dough into four parts. On a lightly floured surface, roll one part of dough to ⅛-in. thickness; cut with a floured 3-in. biscuit cutter. Place 2 tsp. filling in center of each circle. Moisten edges with water; fold in half and press edges to seal. Repeat with remaining dough and filling.
5. Bring a Dutch oven of water to a boil; add pierogies in batches. Reduce heat to simmer; cook 1-2 minutes or until pierogies float to top and are tender. Remove with slotted spoon; cool.
6. Place on waxed paper-lined 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pans; freeze until firm. Transfer to resealable plastic freezer bags. Freeze up to 3 months.
To prepare frozen pierogies: In a large skillet, saute four pierogies and onion in butter until pierogies are lightly browned and heated through; sprinkle with parsley.

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Roasted Tomato Soup

PREP: 30 MIN. • **COOK:** 30 MIN. • **YIELD:** 6 SERVINGS (1½ QT.)

- **15 large tomatoes (5 lbs.), seeded and quartered**
- **¼ cup plus 2 Tbsp. canola oil, divided**
- **8 garlic cloves, minced**
- **1 large onion, chopped**
- **2 cups water**
- **1 tsp. salt**
- **½ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes, optional**
- **½ cup heavy whipping cream**
- **Fresh basil leaves, optional**

1. Place tomatoes in a greased 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan. Combine ¼ cup oil and garlic; drizzle over tomatoes. Toss to coat. Bake at 400° for 15-20 minutes or until softened, stirring occasionally. Cool slightly. Remove and discard skins.
2. Meanwhile, in a Dutch oven, saute onion in remaining oil until tender. Add the tomatoes, water, salt and pepper flakes if desired. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 30 minutes or until flavors are blended. Cool slightly.
3. In a blender, process soup in batches until smooth. Stir in cream; heat through. Cool; transfer to freezer containers. Cover and freeze for up to 3 months.
To use frozen soup: Thaw in the refrigerator overnight. Place in a large saucepan; heat through. Garnish with basil if desired.

Mom's Italian Beef Sandwiches

MARY MCVEY COLFAX, NORTH CAROLINA

My mom made the best Italian beef. I've added to it over the years, but it's still her recipe. She made this for family reunions, and there were never leftovers. Now I make it for myself and freeze it in single-serving sizes. It makes a quick and easy meal as a sandwich or served over noodles.

Italian Sausage Minestrone

ELIZABETH RENTERIA VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON

This no-fuss minestrone is perfect family fare on chilly days. Feeling daring? Substitute a can of butter beans or pinto beans for one of the cans of cannellini beans. Serve it with warm crusty French bread for dipping.

Flaky Egg Bake

CRYSTAL BRUNS ILIFF, COLORADO

Phyllo dough adds a touch of elegance and layers of super flaky, buttery crispness to this company-special breakfast bake.

Nutty Caramel Ice Cream Cake

TINA STELZL WAXHAW, NORTH CAROLINA

Tuck this dessert in the freezer for one of those anytime celebrations. This caramel, butter pecan and almond version is our favorite, but try it with other ice cream flavors.

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Italian Sausage Minestrone

PREP: 20 MIN. + FREEZING • **COOK:** 1¼ HOURS
YIELD: 13 SERVINGS (3¼ QT.)

- **1 lb. bulk Italian sausage**
- **2 large carrots, chopped**
- **2 celery ribs, chopped**
- **1 medium onion, chopped**
- **6 garlic cloves, minced**
- **3 Tbsp. olive oil**
- **7 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth**
- **2 cans (15 oz. each) cannellini or white kidney beans, rinsed and drained**
- **2 cans (14½ oz. each) fire-roasted diced tomatoes, undrained**
- **2 bay leaves**
- **1 Tbsp. Italian seasoning**
- **1 Tbsp. tomato paste**

ADDITIONAL INGREDIENTS:

- **1 cup ditalini or other small pasta**
- **Shredded or shaved Parmesan cheese**

1. In a Dutch oven, cook sausage over medium heat until no longer pink; drain.
2. In the same pan, saute the carrots, celery, onion and garlic in oil until tender. Stir in the broth, beans, tomatoes, bay leaves, Italian seasoning, tomato paste and sausage. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 30 minutes.
3. Cool soup; transfer to freezer containers. Freeze for up to 3 months.
To use frozen soup: Thaw in the refrigerator overnight. Transfer to a Dutch oven. Bring to a boil. Stir in ditalini; return to a boil. Reduce heat and cook, uncovered, for 6-8 minutes or until pasta is tender. Serve with cheese.

Mom's Italian Beef Sandwiches

PREP: 20 MIN. • **COOK:** 8 HOURS • **YIELD:** 16 SERVINGS

- **1 boneless beef rump roast or bottom round roast (2 lbs.), halved**
- **1 boneless beef chuck roast (2 lbs.), halved**
- **1 beef sirloin tip roast (1 lb.)**
- **2 Tbsp. canola oil**
- **2 cups water**
- **1 medium onion, chopped**
- **4 garlic cloves, minced**
- **2 envelopes Italian salad dressing mix**
- **1 envelope zesty Italian salad dressing mix**
- **1 envelope (0.87 oz.) brown gravy mix**
- **2 Tbsp. crushed red pepper flakes**
- **1 Tbsp. Italian seasoning**
- **2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce**
- **16 hoagie buns, split**
- **Sliced provolone cheese, optional**
- **Giardiniera, optional**

1. In a large skillet, brown each roast in oil on all sides. Drain. Transfer meat to a 7-qt. slow cooker. Combine the water, onion, garlic, salad dressing and gravy mixes, pepper flakes, Italian seasoning and Worcestershire sauce; pour over beef. Cover and cook on low for 8-10 hours or until meat is tender.
2. Remove beef; cool slightly. Skim fat from cooking juices. Pour juices into a large bowl. Shred beef with two forks; add to bowl. Cool. Transfer to freezer containers. Freeze for up to 3 months.
To use frozen meat: Thaw in the refrigerator overnight. Place in a Dutch oven; heat through. Using a slotted spoon, place ½ cup on each bun. Top with cheese and giardiniera if desired.

Nutty Caramel Ice Cream Cake

PREP: 30 MIN. + FREEZING • **YIELD:** 16 SERVINGS

- **4 cups crushed pecan shortbread cookies (about 52 cookies)**
- **¼ cup butter, melted**
- **6 cups butter pecan ice cream, softened**
- **1 carton (8 oz.) frozen whipped topping, thawed**
- **¾ cup slivered almonds, toasted**
- **¾ cup milk chocolate English toffee bits**
- **¼ cup caramel sundae syrup**

1. In a large bowl, combine cookie crumbs and butter. Press 2 cups onto the bottom of a greased 9-in. springform pan. Spoon half of the ice cream into the prepared pan. Freeze for 20 minutes.
2. Repeat layers with remaining cookie crumbs and ice cream. Spread with whipped topping. Sprinkle with almonds and toffee bits. Cover and freeze overnight or until firm. May be frozen for up to 2 months.
To use frozen cake: Remove from freezer 10 minutes before serving. Drizzle with syrup.

Flaky Egg Bake

PREP: 40 MIN. + FREEZING • **BAKE:** 40 MIN. • **YIELD:** 12 SERVINGS

- **¾ lb. bulk Italian sausage**
- **1 cup sliced fresh mushrooms**
- **1 medium onion, finely chopped**
- **1 medium sweet red pepper, chopped**
- **1 medium green pepper, chopped**
- **6 eggs, divided**
- **1½ cups (6 oz.) shredded Havarti cheese**
- **1 pkg. (10 oz.) frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry**
- **1 cup ricotta cheese**
- **⅓ cup grated Parmesan cheese**
- **2 Tbsp. minced fresh basil or 2 tsp. dried basil**
- **1 cup butter, melted**
- **30 sheets phyllo dough (14 in. x 9 in.)**

1. In a large skillet, cook sausage, mushrooms, onion and peppers over medium heat until meat is no longer pink and vegetables are tender; drain. Return sausage mixture to skillet. Whisk 5 eggs; add to skillet. Cook and stir over medium-high heat until set; stir in Havarti cheese. Set aside.
2. In a bowl, combine spinach, ricotta cheese, Parmesan cheese, basil and remaining egg. Brush a 13 in.- x 9-in. baking pan with butter. Unroll phyllo; trim to fit into pan.
3. Layer 10 sheets in prepared pan, brushing each sheet with butter. (Cover remaining phyllo with plastic wrap and a damp towel to prevent drying.) Top with half of sausage mixture.
4. Layer with 10 phyllo sheets, brushing each with butter; spread with ricotta mixture. Layer with five phyllo sheets, brushing again with butter; top with remaining sausage mixture. Layer with remaining phyllo and butter. Cut into 12 rectangles. Cover and freeze for up to 3 months.
To use frozen casserole: Thaw in refrigerator overnight. Remove from refrigerator 30 minutes before baking. Cover and bake at 350° for 40-50 minutes or until heated through.

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CELEBRATING the PEOPLE around the *Taste of Home* table

A Funny Slice of Life

Earning a college degree doesn't necessarily mean you know **pumpkins are a key ingredient** in pumpkin pie | BY **SAMANTHA ROBERTS** | ILLUSTRATION BY **JENNY BOWERS**

Once, my boyfriend's mom sent me a couple of pie pumpkins. It was a lovely gesture but I had two problems: I had never made pumpkin pie before and my shared college dorm kitchen doubled as a game room, complete with pool and air hockey tables.

My boyfriend, Ryan, jumped in to help (which goes to show how much he *really* likes pumpkin pie). We overcame the space and cookware limitations and, as we lined up all the ingredients, another student walked in, saw the pumpkins and asked what our project was. I told her we were making a pie. She paused, looked at me matter-of-factly and said, "You can't make a pumpkin pie out of a pumpkin."

I barely managed not to burst out laughing as she left, still convinced that all pumpkin pies begin in a can. Soon, other students began raving about the aroma. The scent was all they got, though, because Ryan devoured almost all of it that night. Only my roommate managed to snag a piece. She has since become a pumpkin pie snob, always asking if it was made from a pumpkin or a can. With mine, she always knows the answer. ■

SHARE YOUR STORY Do you have a heartwarming kitchen memory or funny tale about Thanksgiving dinner? We'd love to hear it. Send it to **editors@tasteofhome.com**

Samantha, who lives in Fairhaven, Connecticut, is a graduate student in biology. She and Ryan now compete each October to see who can carve the nerdiest pumpkin. Last year, her T4 bacteriophage design made Ryan's attempt terminally redundant.

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Fun Wins Over Finicky

Captivate even **the pickiest of eaters** with clever tips and products that make **dinnertime an event to embrace**

Wacky Wins Kids love food that looks fun. *Taste of Home* Food Styling Manager Sarah Thompson makes veggie rainbows for her daughter. The purple cauliflower, available at grocery stores, is always a hit.

There are so many ways to cause offense: the unspeakable squishiness of a pea, the mortal sin of letting foods touch on the plate, an unfamiliar aroma that leads to a cry of "What stinks?" Picky eaters can make even the most patient cook want to chase after a noisy critic with a spatula. But there are ways to tempt persnickety palates. Check out how other *Taste of Home* readers get choosy chewers to chow down.

My daughter gets her son to eat by telling him he's the official taster. If she's making something new, she says, "You have to be the taster and make sure we'll all like it." It works—he thinks of it as his job.
—SUSAN MURRAY OLMSTEAD FALLS, OHIO

I like to use the stealth method of cooking for my vegetable-snubbing kids. Since they can't resist macaroni and cheese, I sneak vegetables into the finished dish. First, I puree cooked broccoli, spinach or even edamame beans, then stir them into the finished dish. They love their green mac and cheese, and have no idea that I've added in all of those extra good-for-you ingredients. (Of course, I make sure they're not in the kitchen when I make it!)
— ERIN RUSSELL AUSTIN, TEXAS

My son's never liked brussels sprouts. One evening I made them with a yummy cheese sauce. When my son asked what they were, I exclaimed, "Monster eyeballs!" I stirred them for effect, showed him all the gooey "brain stuff" on them, and asked if he'd like to try them. He ate the whole pan and asked for more! From then on, whenever I asked what he wanted for dinner, he'd say, "Monster eyeballs!"
—MICHELE BATTRICK RANDLE, WASHINGTON

Foods *You* Refuse

We asked our Facebook friends for their best picky eater stories and got hundreds of responses. Here are some highlights:

- I have to tear the ends off my nephew's french fries because he won't eat anything that looks pointy.
- I disliked sandwiches so much when I was little that, as a first-grader, I took them out of my lunch and hid them in my desk. The smell got so bad the teacher finally discovered them and called my parents.
- My son went through a phase where he'd only eat a certain brand of fish sticks. I'd save the box and stick other fish sticks in it, but he always knew.
- My husband says he won't eat mushrooms or onions. Little does he know they're minced up into almost everything I make.
- My stepdaughter won't eat anything that's cold, so everything, including milk, juice, lunch meat and fresh veggies, has to take a turn in the microwave. We don't even think about offering her ice cream!

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Let your kids help fix the meal, even if it's just adding a sprinkling of cheese. Then they'll be proud to eat what they helped prepare.
—JILL THOMAS WASHINGTON, INDIANA

Use cookie cutters to cut your kids' food into fun shapes. Give them their own special napkins, spoons or cups, too. My kids love their personal plates because they make them feel special.
—ANGIE STEELE MADISONVILLE, KENTUCKY

I get veggies into my kids by letting them make their own pizzas. I make the dough and give them a hunk to stretch or roll out on parchment paper. They pick the sauce, veggies, meats and cheeses to put on top. The rule is that they have to choose at least one vegetable for their pizza. Similarly, my brother sets up a sandwich bar where his kids pick from breads, spreads, veggies, meats and cheeses.
— KIRSTEN OLSON MADAUS DAYTON, OHIO

To get my two finicky sons to eat more fruit, I gave them each a toothpick and cut an apple into cubes for them. Then I poured a package of dry sugar-free Jell-O into a small bowl for them to use as a dip. It gave the apples a great new taste and made them fun to eat.
—BONNIE VAN LEEUWEN ORANGE CITY, IOWA

Aiden Saltanovich, age 4 ▼

Alilyah Dona Reese, age 2 ▼

Cute Cutlery

Mealtime's irresistible when served on unexpected tableware.

1 Dinnertime Dress-Up
Mr. and Ms. Food Face welcome kids to get creative at the table and play with whatever is being served. **popdeluxe.net**, *$13*

2 Prehistoric Cutlery
Here are the fork and spoon millions of years in the making. Who knew a Spoonosaurus and Tricerafork could make eating so fun? **coolstuffexpress.com**, *$16*

3 Build and Bite
Snack & Stack utensils bring a little bit of playtime to mealtime with their Lego-like appearance. **fredflare.com**, *$22*

4 The Mat with More
Cover the table with family- and kid-focused questions and topics, and you've got dinnertime talk galore. **yourchatmat.com**, *set of four laminated mats, $27*

5 It's Personal
Talk about customized dining! Serve meals on one-of-a-kind bowls and plates that look just like your little eater. **olliegraphic.com**, *$20-24* ■

Sebastian McChesney, age 3 ▶

MORE ONLINE:
For this issue's coloring book page, go to **tasteofhome.com/kids**

GOT A KID WHO COOKS?
We're looking for kid-friendly recipes you make together, from healthy snacks to dinner and dessert. Send them to **tasteofhome.com/submit**

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Meals on Two Wheels

A grassroots movement to **help feed the homeless** in Charlotte, North Carolina, takes on hunger, **one burrito at a time** BY **RENEE SCHETTLER ROSSI** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **LISA ADAMS**

Bikers Packing Breakfast A typical Sunday morning finds Tommy Holderness *far right,* and John Oxrider *fourth from right,* along with family and friends, pedaling their bikes to deliver breakfast burritos to the hungry and homeless.

John Oxrider was at a block party when neighbor Tommy Holderness mentioned he was delivering burritos on his bicycle early the next morning—for the homeless. "I remember thinking, *You're doing what?*" says John. "It really intrigued me, so I volunteered to ride along."

That was four years ago. They've been delivering their backpacks of warm breakfast burritos to the homeless every Sunday morning since.

Tommy committed to the unusual weekend ritual after reading about cyclists in Los Angeles who delivered bean and rice burritos to folks living on Skid Row. Inspired, he started spending his spare time before church on Sunday riding around central Charlotte, North Carolina, seeking the hungry. "At first it was a hard sell. These guys didn't know who I was—just some guy riding on a bicycle, offering them a bean and rice burrito at 8 a.m. They were understandably a little skeptical," he recalls. "They'd look at me like, Who the heck are you?"

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Sharing and Caring The Burrito Bikers bundle up breakfast burritos made from scrambled eggs, sausage, cheese, potatoes, and a lot of care. They make about 50 burritos each Saturday night to warm up and deliver the next morning. The Sunday morning ritual includes sharing and connecting with others.

It took persistence, but after patiently cycling in Sunday after Sunday after Sunday—and swapping rice and beans for a more breakfast-friendly burrito scramble—the silent stares were replaced with smiles and a chorus of "Hey, burrito man!"

As the number of hungry homeless who showed up for burritos swelled from two dozen to nearly 50, so did the grassroots brigade of volunteers known as the Burrito Bikers. About 40 families now donate their time, goodwill and burrito-rolling skills. Margo Wells, a friend of John's, looped in more friends, neighbors, co-workers and parishioners who volunteer to cook, ride or do both.

SMALL ACTS, BIG DIFFERENCE

Those who ride know they deliver more than just a burrito. "Let's face it, we're not solving the homeless problem in Charlotte," says John. "I've learned that when you show up for someone every week, it makes a difference.

"At first I thought I was doing something for people living on the street," he says. "But I think the far bigger impact is on our families. It really makes you stop and think."

Parents especially value Burrito Bikers as a way to engage their children in conversation about larger issues. "It's so easy, and it takes no time at all," says Dianne Bailey, whose family regularly forms an assembly line in the kitchen to make burritos. "The kids can mix things up and wrap the tortillas around the filling. And it really makes them feel connected to the people we feed."

RECIPE FOR SHARING

It all starts with Tommy's simple recipe: scrambled eggs, sausage, Tater Tots and cheddar cheese wrapped in flour tortillas. The burritos are dropped off Saturday evening at the home of the biker leading the next day's ride. The next morning, warm burritos are packed in insulated bags and doled out to the cyclists for the four-mile ride to central Charlotte.

Unofficial Burrito Bikers offshoots have popped up elsewhere, including one in Greensboro organized by Tommy's brother, Hayes. "When it comes down to it, this is an incredible group of people who love to cook, love to bike and who really care about other people," says John. "This is a way to do all of that." ■

MORE ONLINE
To learn about the many ways caring cooks are changing the world, visit **cookswhocare.com**

> "At first I thought I was doing something for people living on the street. But I think the far bigger impact is on our families. It really makes you stop and think."
>
> —JOHN OXRIDER

SHARE YOUR STORY Tell us how you or someone you know gives back through cooking. Email **editors@tasteofhome.com**. If your story is selected, we'll award your charity **$250**.

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◀ Italian Sausage Quiche

MUST TRY!

Hugs & Quiches

Breakfast at a B&B run by a *TOH* Field Editor in the **heart of Ohio's Amish country** is served up with helpings of love | RECIPES AND STORY BY **LEE ANN MILLER**

Visitors travel to Ohio's Amish country to experience the beauty of our landscapes and to witness our peaceful lifestyle, but most of all they come to eat.

Holmes County, home to the world's largest Amish settlement, is known for its amazing food. Our kitchens overflow with rich and hearty fare.

My husband, Daryl, was raised by an Old Order Amish mother who divided her days between the garden and the kitchen. My Swiss-German family was always well fed by my mother, too.

Our backgrounds were perfect for the work we do. For 18 years, we have owned and operated Miller Haus Bed and Breakfast, a nine-room Amish-style home where we offer lodging and meals to travelers. My husband and his uncle built the building. I furnished it with antiques and lots of country charm, and before I knew it, I was making breakfast every day for our guests.

Amish ways influence my cooking, especially the use of quality ingredients. Going green and eating organic are nothing new here: Amish people have lived such a lifestyle and raised fruits, vegetables, meat and dairy in that manner for generations, well before the terms "organic" and "green" existed.

Locally produced foods are everywhere. We keep our own chickens, so the eggs we serve couldn't be any fresher. There are Amish produce stands around every corner. One of my favorites is Blessings Acres, owned by two Amish widows who bottle their own honey. When I stopped there recently, the women were gone, but the honey was still there—accompanied by a pail with a sign reading, "Put money here."

I do most of the B&B cooking, but I have great helpers. My sons Ted and Joe—whose favorite dessert is Two-Chip Chocolate Chippers (recipe on *page 73*)—are really good in the kitchen. I've always told my boys, "Don't ever let anyone tell you that real men don't cook."

Food means many things to people, but to me food means love. In my daily cooking, whether I'm making a special dinner, baking a chocolate cake or kneading a hearty loaf of bread, I am communicating to the people at our table, "You are important to our family. You have value. You are loved."

—As told to Deborah Wagman

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Italian Sausage Quiche

This—our most popular recipe—is created using mild Italian sausage made especially for us by our local butcher. For the best flavor in this quiche, choose sausage that is not too heavily spiced.

PREP: 30 MIN. • **BAKE:** 35 MIN. + STANDING
YIELD: 6 SERVINGS

- **Pastry for single-crust pie (9 in.)**
- **1 lb. bulk Italian sausage**
- **¼ cup chopped onion**
- **¼ cup chopped green pepper**
- **4 tsp. chopped seeded jalapeno pepper**
- **1 cup (4 oz.) shredded sharp cheddar cheese**
- **3 eggs**
- **1 cup heavy whipping cream**
- **1 tsp. minced fresh parsley**
- **1 tsp. minced fresh basil**
- **¼ tsp. pepper**
- **⅛ tsp. salt**
- **Dash garlic powder**
- **Dash cayenne pepper**

1. Roll out pastry to fit a 9-in. pie plate. Transfer pastry to pie plate. Trim pastry to ½ in. beyond edge of plate; flute edges. Line unpricked pastry with a double thickness of heavy-duty foil. Fill with dried beans, uncooked rice or pie weights.
2. Bake at 450° for 8 minutes. Remove foil and weights; bake 5 minutes longer. Cool on a wire rack.
3. Meanwhile, in a large skillet, cook the sausage, onion, green pepper and jalapeno over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain. Spoon into shell and sprinkle with cheese.
4. In a large bowl, whisk the remaining ingredients; pour over cheese. Bake at 375° for 35-40 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Let stand for 10 minutes before cutting.
Editor's Note: *We recommend wearing disposable gloves when cutting hot peppers. Avoid touching your face.*

◀ **Two-Chip Chocolate Chippers**

Banana Pecan Loaf

We slice this banana bread so thick it's almost embarrassing—but the fat slices let us slather on generous portions of the Pineapple Spread. To make the spread super fluffy, beat the cream cheese until it's as light as whipped cream.

PREP: 25 MIN. • **BAKE:** 50 MIN + COOLING
YIELD: 1 LOAF (16 SLICES)

- **½ cup butter, softened**
- **1 cup packed brown sugar**
- **2 eggs**
- **3 medium ripe bananas, mashed**
- **2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **½ tsp. baking powder**
- **½ tsp. baking soda**
- **½ tsp. salt**
- **½ cup chopped pecans**

PINEAPPLE SPREAD:

- **1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened**
- **1 cup canned crushed pineapple, well drained**

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in bananas. Combine the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt; add to creamed mixture. Fold in pecans.
2. Transfer batter to a greased 9-in. x 5-in. loaf pan. Bake at 350° for 50-60 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center of the loaf comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing loaf from pan to a wire rack.
3. In a small bowl, combine cream cheese and pineapple. Serve with banana bread.

Two-Chip Chocolate Chippers

When baking this chocolate chip cookie recipe, I'm a stickler for using one stick of butter and one stick of margarine—the combination of fats gives the cookies terrific texture. And do not use a scooper—the tool compacts the cookies too much.

PREP: 20 MIN. • **BAKE:** 10 MIN./BATCH
YIELD: 5 DOZEN

- **½ cup butter, softened**
- **½ cup stick margarine, softened**
- **¾ cup packed brown sugar**
- **¼ cup sugar**
- **2 eggs**
- **1½ tsp. vanilla extract**
- **2¼ cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 pkg. (3.4 oz.) instant vanilla pudding mix**
- **1 tsp. baking soda**
- **1½ cups semisweet chocolate chips**
- **1½ cups milk chocolate chips**
- **1½ cups chopped pecans, optional**

1. In a large bowl, cream the butter, margarine and sugars until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Combine the flour, pudding mix and baking soda; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in chocolate chips and pecans if desired.
2. Drop by rounded tablespoonfuls 1 in. apart onto ungreased baking sheets; flatten slightly with a glass. Bake at 375° for 8-10 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove cookies to wire racks. ■

Lee Ann Miller cooks for a variety of visitors at Miller Haus Bed and Breakfast in Millersburg, Ohio. "It's another way to show I care," she says. "There's nothing better than seeing my creations disappear."

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FALL INSPIRES FAMILY FUN

As the tattered winds of autumn toss around **amber-hued leaves**, these two Field Editors, Zia McNeal and Teresa Heaney, prepare for the **season with heartwarming foods** and special recipes

Zia McNeal MAPLE GROVE, MINNESOTA

An avid party planner and mom who has been swapping recipes with others for over a decade.

Halloween is my favorite part of fall, and we always find special ways to celebrate. My mom sews a homemade costume each year for my 6-year-old son, Tarik, and I like to share fun, easy-to-make foods with friends and visitors. The Poison Punch, *below*, is great at parties. The magic happens in front of your eyes as the carbonation and Jell-O react to create a little volcano. It's so fun!

POISON PUNCH

Pour clear bubbly **soda** into a glass. Add 1 Tbsp. of **orange Jell-O** and stir slightly.

Teresa Heaney BELFAST, NEW YORK

A guidance counselor and mother of three who spends considerable time in the kitchen with her children building fond memories together.

For me, food is tied to the seasons, and by the time fall arrives, I'm ready for warm, hearty and comforting dishes. One that I love, and that brings me back to my childhood, is this Nutmeg Spiced Milk. My mother and grandmother served it over warm apple crisp, and it was delicious.

NUTMEG SPICED MILK

Add ¼ tsp. **nutmeg** to ½ cup **milk** and gently warm on the stove while stirring. Splash some on apple crisps, pies, oatmeal and more.

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close encounter

Many of our Field Editors are recognized in public. Here is one such experience.

I've been a Field Editor for years and have been recognized at different places when people hear my name. Most recently, I was at an art exhibit with a friend, and as she introduced me to her acquaintances, one woman exclaimed, "You're the cook! I've seen your name and recipes in *Taste of Home*!" It was an unexpected treat!

—LUCIA JOHNSON
MASSENA, NEW YORK

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Totally *Nuts* About Pie

For a crunchy slice of heaven, **take a sweet trip through states** renowned for nutty wonders. Or wander into your own kitchen to **make these reader-favorite pies** | BY JANE AND MICHAEL STERN

Fruit pies and cream pies are delightful, but there's something extra-special about a pie that is extremely nutty. For an over-the-top sensation, grab a fork and break into a slice of pecan pie at **Royers Round Top Cafe** in Round Top, Texas (population 77), midway between Austin and Houston. At Royers—one of the nation's premier pie palaces—the pecan pie is layered with crunchy, plump nut halves piled generously on top of a thick, amber ribbon of sweet filling. Proprietor Bud Royer knows that a good nut pie is always better served a la mode. Skip the ice cream and you just might be charged 50 cents extra, according to the Round Top menu.

Because pecans are big in Texas, Royers isn't the only spot where the nuts are flaunted. From Round Top, head west to Kyle for pecan pie perfection at the **Texas Pie Company**. Their motto: "Life's Short—Eat More Pie."

Continue your trek westward toward Fredericksburg and the **Fredericksburg Pie Company**, where the specialty is bourbon orange pecan pie. Or steer toward Georgetown, north of Austin, where the Monument Cafe does it upside down. The cafe offers a fudgy chocolate pie with a crust that's actually a thick bed of pecans held together by a sweet glaze.

Beyond pecans, in the hill country town of Marble Falls, the **Blue Bonnet Cafe** hosts a Pie Happy Hour every weekday from 3 to 5 p.m. The nut-crowned peanut butter cream pie there is presented with the brilliant flourish of chocolate syrup served in a cup. Diners can dip each forkful of pie into the chocolate, or lavishly pour it over the entire slice.

Peanut lovers know all about Virginia peanuts, considered by connoisseurs to be the biggest and tastiest of the goobers. The **Virginia Diner** in Wakefield, Virginia, stocks a full inventory of large, meaty peanuts roasted to blistery perfection. Plan on ordering the "world famous" peanut pie, which is surprisingly more earthy than syrupy-sweet—a subtle reminder that the peanut is not really a nut at all, but a legume.

Farther up the East Coast, in Waldoboro, Maine, maple syrup rules. Maine bakers combine it with walnuts in a to-die-for twist on the classic pecan pie. A slice of maple walnut pie, a local favorite at grand old **Moody's Diner**, tastes righteous and sinful at the same time, especially when served under a billowy cloud of whipped cream. Another nutty state is Oregon, where the fall harvest in the Willamette Valley nets 20,000 tons of hazelnuts each year. It's no

▲ **Mixed Nut 'n' Fig Pie**

Award-winning travel and food writers **Jane and Michael Stern**, who focus on the best regional specialties, share witty descriptions of many of this country's signature dishes in their new book, *The Lexicon of Real American Food*. See *page 12* for details.

PHOTOGRAPH OF STERNS: TODD FRANCE

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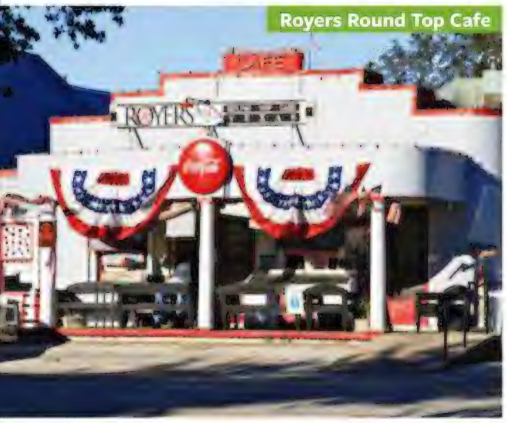

Royers Round Top Cafe

Moody's Diner

wonder that the crunchy little spheres, also called filberts, find their way into a variety of savory and sweet dishes throughout the Pacific Northwest. At a charming little Portland food cart called the **Pie Spot**, small single-serving pies are dense with the combo of chocolate and hazelnuts.

Head farther out in the Pacific Ocean to find the queen of all nuts, the macadamia. Its rich flavor permeates each legendary piece of Mac Pie served at **Sheila Everitt's Mac Pie** shop in Kona, Hawaii. Her adaptation of her mother's recipe for Southern chess pie results in a fantastic fusion food that starts with a butter-macadamia nut crust under a filling blanketed with the nuts. There's a hint of coconut macaroon in it, too. If your calendar doesn't include immediate travel plans, tide yourself over by making your own nut-filled pies from recipes offered by *Taste of Home* readers.

◂ Pie Holes-in-the-Wall
Stop for a nut pie if you spot these places, from top: Royers Round Top Cafe in Texas and Moody's Diner in Waldoboro, Maine.

◂ **Greek Honey Nut Pie**

Greek Honey Nut Pie

It's all about the walnuts in this sweet treat fancied up with ready-made phyllo dough. Find phyllo in the frozen food section of your market.

—**ROSALIND JACKSON** STUART, FLORIDA

PREP: 30 MIN. • **BAKE:** 40 MIN. + COOLING
YIELD: 8 SERVINGS

- **4 cups chopped walnuts**
- **¼ cup packed brown sugar**
- **1 tsp. ground cinnamon**
- **1 cup butter, melted**
- **1 pkg. (16 oz., 14-in. x 9-in. sheet size) frozen phyllo dough, thawed**

SYRUP:

- **¾ cup sugar**
- **½ cup water**
- **½ cup honey**
- **1 tsp. vanilla extract**

1. In a large bowl, combine the walnuts, brown sugar and cinnamon; set aside. Brush a 9-in. pie plate with some of the butter; set aside.
2. Unroll phyllo dough; keep covered with plastic wrap and a damp towel to prevent it from drying out. Layer eight sheets of phyllo in prepared pan, brushing each layer with butter and rotating sheets to cover the pie plate. Let edges of dough hang over sides. Sprinkle a third of the nut mixture onto the bottom.
3. Layer four sheets of phyllo over nut mixture in the same manner; sprinkle with a third of the nut mixture. Repeat these last two steps. Top with an additional eight sheets of phyllo, again brushing with butter and rotating sheets. Fold ends of phyllo up over top of pie; brush with butter.
4. Using a sharp knife, cut into eight wedges. Cut 1-2 additional sheets of phyllo into thin strips; arrange decoratively on top. (Save remaining phyllo for another use.) Bake pie at 350° for 40-45 minutes or until golden brown.
5. Meanwhile, in a saucepan, combine the sugar, water and honey; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 10 minutes. Add vanilla. Pour over warm pie. Cool on a wire rack. Refrigerate leftovers.

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PHOTOGRAPHS: ROYERS; TIM TAYLOR; MOODY'S, COURTESY MOODY'S DINER

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Velvety Chocolate Butter Pecan Pie

Serious dessert lovers go nuts over this combination of two classics: pecan pie and chocolate pie. Bittersweet chocolate keeps this version from becoming too sweet.

—**HELEN FIELDS** SPRINGTOWN, TEXAS

PREP: 45 MIN. + CHILLING • **BAKE:** 55 MIN.
YIELD: 8 SERVINGS

▼ **Velvety Chocolate Butter Pecan Pie**

- **1¼ cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 Tbsp. sugar**
- **½ tsp. salt**
- **⅓ cup cold butter**
- **2 Tbsp. butter-flavored shortening**
- **3 to 4 Tbsp. ice water**
- **½ tsp. white vinegar**
- **¼ tsp. vanilla extract**

EGG WASH:

- **1 egg**
- **1 Tbsp. water**

FILLING:

- **½ cup butter**
- **4 oz. bittersweet chocolate, chopped**
- **1¼ cups packed brown sugar**
- **¾ cup light corn syrup**
- **3 eggs, lightly beaten**
- **2 Tbsp. molasses**
- **1 tsp. vanilla extract**
- **½ tsp. salt**
- **1½ cups finely chopped pecans**
- **½ cup pecan halves**

1. In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar and salt; cut in the butter and shortening until crumbly. Combine water, vinegar and vanilla. Gradually add to flour mixture, tossing with a fork until dough forms a ball. Wrap in plastic wrap; refrigerate for 8 hours or overnight.

2. Roll out pastry to fit a 9-in. pie plate. Transfer pastry to pie plate. Trim pastry to ½ in. beyond edge of plate; flute edges. Beat egg wash ingredients; brush over pastry.

3. For filling, melt butter and chocolate in a microwave; stir until smooth. In a large bowl, combine the brown sugar, corn syrup, eggs, molasses, vanilla and salt. Stir in chopped pecans and butter mixture. Pour into pastry. Arrange pecan halves over filling.

4. Bake at 350° for 55-65 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Cover edges with foil during the last 15 minutes to prevent overbrowning if necessary. Cool on a wire rack. Refrigerate leftovers.

Mixed Nut 'n' Fig Pie

Can't decide on a favorite nut? This pie settles the question by using mixed nuts, then makes it even more interesting with figs and a hint of orange.

—**BARBARA ESTABROOK**
RHINELANDER, WISCONSIN

PREP: 30 MIN. • **BAKE:** 1 HOUR + COOLING
YIELD: 8 SERVINGS

- **Pastry for single-crust pie (9 in.)**
- **½ cup chopped dried Calimyrna figs**
- **3 Tbsp. water**
- **2 Tbsp. orange marmalade**
- **¾ cup packed brown sugar**
- **1 Tbsp. cornstarch**
- **1 cup corn syrup**
- **3 eggs**
- **6 Tbsp. unsalted butter, melted**
- **2 tsp. vanilla extract**
- **1½ cups deluxe mixed nuts**

TOPPING:

- **1 cup heavy whipping cream**
- **2 Tbsp. sugar**
- **1 Tbsp. orange marmalade**

1. Line a 9-in. pie plate with pastry; trim and flute edges. Line pastry with a double thickness of heavy-duty foil. Bake at 450° for 8 minutes. Remove foil; bake 5 minutes longer. Cool on a wire rack. Reduce heat to 300°.

2. In a small saucepan, combine figs and water. Cook and stir over low heat until water is absorbed. Remove from the heat; stir in marmalade. In a large bowl, combine brown sugar and cornstarch. Add the corn syrup, eggs, butter, vanilla and fig mixture; stir in nuts. Pour into crust.

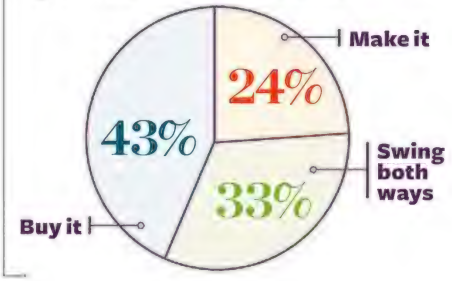
3. Bake at 300° for 1 to 1¼ hours or until set. Cover edges with foil during the last 30 minutes to prevent overbrowning if necessary. Cool on a wire rack.

4. In a small bowl, beat cream until it begins to thicken. Add sugar and marmalade; beat until soft peaks form. Serve topping with pie. Refrigerate leftovers. ■

ARE YOU NUTS? Love walnuts in your pie? Pecans? Tell us which nut pie you most want to try. Go to Jane and Michael Stern's website, **roadfood.com**, and take the pie poll. Or find more recipes—nutty and not—at **tasteofhome.com/roadfood**

Do you make or buy pie crust?

Most people love the convenience of purchased pie dough, according to a survey conducted by Jane and Michael Stern.



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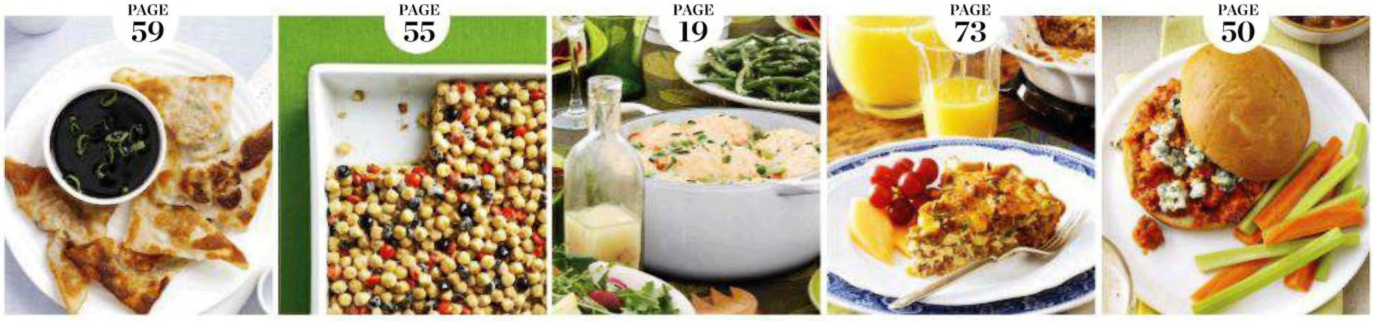

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Nutrition facts for all recipes available at **tasteofhome.com/plus**
Noted costs are price per serving. If no cost is listed, price will vary.
*Recipe includes nutritional facts

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COOKING FOR 2?
Our test kitchen has "paired down" some recipes from this issue. Find "serves 2" versions at **tasteofhome.com/plus**

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CONTRIBUTOR GUIDELINES

1. *Want to see your name in print?* Send us your favorite recipe to share with other readers. It's easy! Simply use the convenient form at **tasteofhome.com/submit**

2. When sending recipes, please be specific with directions, measurements and sizes of cans, packages and pans. And please share a few words about the recipe and yourself. (For recipe contest entries, follow the directions on *page 58*.)

3. Please be patient. Due to the large volume of mail, it can take our small staff several months to review submissions. We may hold your material without informing you, but we will let you know if we publish something you submitted. Materials that won't fit in *Taste of Home* may be considered for our websites, cookbooks, promotions and other publications.

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5. To submit stories, tips, photos or other nonrecipe content, send them to *Taste of Home*, 5400 S. 60th St., Greendale, WI 53129, or email them to **editors@tasteofhome.com**. Please submit high-resolution digital photos as jpegs at 300 dpi.

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Jane Kaczmarek

Forget the **six degrees of Kevin Bacon.** There's only one degree between *Taste of Home* and TV's *Malcolm in the Middle* mom Jane Kaczmarek. She **grew up in Greendale, Wisconsin,** where we're located! INTERVIEW BY **MICHELLE MEYER** | ILLUSTRATION BY **MICHAEL WITTE**

1 Halloween's here! Which candy calls your name? Mini Snickers and mini Almond Joys are irresistible.

2 You're such a good cook. Any funny food foul-ups? I once quadrupled a recipe for guests, but didn't factor in the longer cook time. People arrived and four hours later were falling asleep—before the chicken was even done!

3 Now how do you avoid disasters? I have everything done beforehand. Once people arrive, I start talking, have a glass of wine—and forget that I'm in charge of the meal!

4 So do you prefer improvising or sticking to the script—er, recipe? I always start with a recipe to know the portions, then I try to improve it.

5 Leftovers... love 'em or leave 'em? Love them! I love eating the same thing until it's gone. After all, you've put all that time and effort into cooking it.

6 Any leftovers in your fridge right now? Um, some molded cheese and funnel cake batter. I adore hot dough with powdered sugar! Mold, not as much.

7 Ever cook from a box? Yes! Scalloped potatoes, with ham, which I serve to actors I invite over. And I make cakes from a mix.

8 What's your must-have gadget? A citrus reamer to squeeze California oranges and lemons. There's nothing you can't do with it—well, except sell lemonade for $35 a glass (as my 8-year-old tried to do).

9 Do you have a secret ingredient? Mayonnaise. I put it on sandwiches, potatoes, frozen green peas—anything! It makes cakes moister if you substitute mayonnaise for oil.

10 Last question: Do you ever miss us here in Greendale? All the time. Greendale is so friendly. My parents still live in the house they built in 1968. The family across the street offers to help my dad shovel snow. There's a real sense of community. ■

Jane is a real Renaissance woman. The seven-time Emmy-nominated actress is a contributor to *The Hollywod Cookbook,* mother of three, and a formidable fundraiser for various children's charities.

MORE ONLINE
For one of Jane's tried-and-true family holiday recipes—from 1961!—visit **tasteofhome.com/acrossthetable**

CANDY BARS: CHRIS TURNER/GETTY IMAGES; CITRUS REAMER: TOGGA/GETTY IMAGES

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